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PUSHING TO THE FRONT

"I Will Find a Way or Make One"

A BOOK OF INSPIRATION AND ENCOURAGEMENT
TO ALL WHO ARE STRUGGLING FOR SELF-
ELEVATION ALONG THE PATHS OF
KNOWLEDGE AND OF DUTY

BY

ORISON SWETT MARDEN

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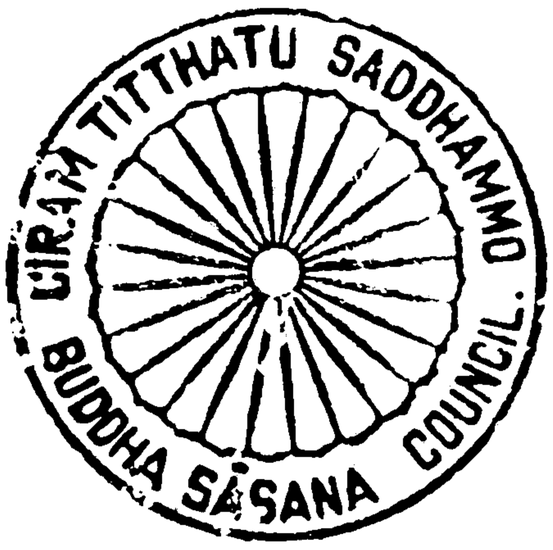

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CONTENTS

Pushing to the Front

CHAPTER I

The Man and the Opportunity

"IF we succeed, what will the world say?" asked Captain Berry in delight, when Nelson had explained his carefully formed plan before the battle of the Nile.

"There is no *if* in the case," replied Nelson. "That we shall succeed is certain. Who may live to tell the tale is a very different question." Then, as his captains rose from the council to go to their respective ships, he added: "Before this time to-morrow I shall have gained a peerage or Westminster Abbey." His quick eye and daring spirit saw an opportunity of glorious victory where others saw only probable defeat.

"Is it POSSIBLE to cross the path?" asked Napoleon of the engineers who had been sent to explore the dreaded pass of St. Bernard. "Perhaps," was the hesitating reply, "it is within the limits of *possibility*." "FORWARD, THEN," said the Little Corporal, heeding not

night with the camp-fires of the enemy, and supplies had been cut off. Though in great pain, General Grant gave directions for his removal to the new scene of action immediately.

On transports up the Mississippi, the Ohio, and one of its tributaries; on a litter borne by horses for many miles through the wilderness; and into the city at last on the shoulders of four men, he was taken to Chattanooga. Things assumed a different aspect immediately. *A Master* had arrived who was *equal to the situation*. The army felt the grip of his power. Before he could mount his horse, he ordered an advance. Soon the surrounding hills were held by Union soldiers, although the enemy contested the ground inch by inch.

Were these things the result of chance, or were they compelled by the indomitable determination of the injured General?

History furnishes thousands of examples of men who have seized occasions to accomplish results deemed impossible by those less resolute. Prompt decision and whole-souled action sweep the world before them.

Don't wait for extraordinary opportunities. *Seize common occasions and make them great.*

On the morning of September 6, 1838, a

young woman in the Longstone Lighthouse, between England and Scotland, was awakened by shrieks of agony rising above the roar of wind and wave. A storm of unwonted fury was raging, and her parents could not hear the cries; but a telescope showed nine human beings clinging to the windlass of a wrecked vessel whose bow was hanging on the rocks half a mile away. "We can do nothing," said William Darling, the light-keeper. "Ah, yes, we must go to the rescue," exclaimed his daughter, pleading tearfully with both father and mother until the former replied: "Very well, Grace, I will let you persuade me, though it is against my better judgment." Like a feather in a whirlwind the little boat was tossed on the tumultuous sea, and it seemed to Grace that she could feel her brain reel amid the maddening swirl. But borne on the blast that swept the cruel surge, the shrieks of those shipwrecked sailors seemed to change her weak sinews into cords of steel. Strength hitherto unsuspected came from somewhere, and the heroic girl pulled one oar in even time with her father. At length the nine were safely on board. "God bless you; but ye're a bonny English lass," said one poor fellow, as he looked

wonderingly upon this marvelous girl, who that day had done a deed which added more to England's glory than the exploits of many of her monarchs.

Weak men wait for opportunities, strong men make them.

"The best men," says E. H. Chapin, "are not those who have waited for chances but who have taken them; besieged the chance; conquered the chance; and made chance the servitor."

There may not be one chance in a million that you will ever receive aid of this kind; but opportunities are often presented which you can improve to good advantage, if you will only *act.*

"You are too young," said the advertiser for a factory manager in Manchester, England, after a single glance at an applicant. "They used to object to me on that score four or five years ago," replied Robert Owen, "but I did not expect to have it brought up now." "How often do you get drunk in the week?" "I never was drunk in my life," said Owen, blushing. "What salary do you ask?" "Three hundred (pounds) a year." "Three hundred a year! Why I have had I don't know how many

after the place here this morning, and all their askings together would not come up to what you want."

"Whatever others may ask, I cannot take less. I am making three hundred a year by my own business."

The youth, who had never been in a large cotton mill, was put in charge of a factory employing five hundred operatives. By studying machines, cloth, and processes at night, he mastered every detail of the business in a short time, and was soon without a superior in his line in Manchester.

The lack of opportunity is ever the excuse of a weak, vacillating mind. Opportunities! Every life is full of them. Every lesson in school or college is an opportunity. Every examination is a chance in life. Every patient is an opportunity. Every newspaper article is an opportunity. Every client is an opportunity. Every sermon is an opportunity. Every business transaction is an opportunity,—an opportunity to be polite,—an opportunity to be manly,—an opportunity to be honest,—an opportunity to make friends. Every proof of confidence in you is a great opportunity. Every responsibility thrust upon your strength and

your honor is priceless. Existence is the privilege of effort, and when that privilege is met like a man, opportunities to succeed along the line of your aptitude will come faster than you can use them.

It is the idle man, not the great worker, who is always complaining that he has no time or opportunity. Some young men will make more out of the odds and ends of opportunities, which many carelessly throw away, than others will get out of a whole lifetime. Like bees, they extract honey from every flower. Every person they meet, every circumstance of the day, must add something to their store of useful knowledge or personal power.

"What is its name?" asked a visitor in a studio, when shown, among many gods, one whose face was concealed by hair, and which had wings on its feet. "Opportunity," replied the sculptor. "Why is its face hidden?" "Because men seldom know him when he comes to them." "Why has he wings on his feet?" "Because he is soon gone, and once gone, cannot be overtaken."

Life pulsates with chances. They may not be dramatic or great, but they are important to him who would get on in the world.

Mrs. Elizabeth Fry, a Quaker lady, saw her opportunity in the prisons of England. From three hundred to four hundred half-naked women, as late as 1813, would often be huddled in a single ward of Newgate, London, awaiting trial. They had neither beds nor bedding, but women, old and young, and little girls, slept in filth and rags on the floor. No one seemed to care for them, and the Government furnished simply food to keep them alive. She visited Newgate, calmed the howling mob, and told them she wished to establish a school for the young women and the girls, and asked them to select a schoolmistress from their own number. They were amazed, but chose a young woman who had been committed for stealing a watch. In three months these "wild beasts," as they were sometimes called, were tame, and became harmless and kind. The reform spread until the Government legalized the system, and good women throughout Great Britain became interested in the work of educating and clothing these outcasts. Fourscore years have passed, and her plan has been adopted throughout the civilized world.

Are you prepared for a great opportunity?

"Hawthorne dined one day with Longfellow,"

said James T. Fields, "and brought a friend with him from Salem. After dinner the friend said, 'I have been trying to persuade Hawthorne to write a story based upon a legend of Acadia, and still current there,—the legend of a girl who, in the dispersion of the Acadians, was separated from her lover, and passed her life in waiting and seeking for him, and only found him dying in a hospital when both were old.' Longfellow wondered that the legend did not strike the fancy of Hawthorne, and he said to him, 'If you have really made up your mind not to use it for a story, will you let me have it for a poem?' To this Hawthorne consented, and promised, moreover, not to treat the subject in prose till Longfellow had seen what he could do with it in verse. Longfellow seized his opportunity and gave to the world 'Evangeline, or the Exile of the Acadians.'"

Of what value was the old story of Shylock and his pound of flesh (contained in a dozen lines) till Shakespeare touched it with his magic pen and transformed it into a realistic drama?

Open eyes will discover opportunities everywhere; open ears will never fail to detect the cries of those who are perishing for assistance; open hearts will never want for worthy objects

upon which to bestow their gifts; open hands will never lack for noble work to do.

Everybody had noticed the overflow when a solid is immersed in a vessel filled with water, although no one had made use of his knowledge that the body displaces its exact bulk of liquid; but when Archimedes observed the fact, he perceived therein an easy method of finding the cubical contents of objects, however irregular in shape. Everybody knew how steadily a suspended weight, when moved, sways back and forth until friction and the resistance of the air bring it to rest, yet no one considered this information of the slightest practical importance; but the boy Galileo, as he watched a lamp left swinging by accident in the cathedral at Pisa, saw in the regularity of those oscillations the useful principle of the pendulum. Even the iron doors of a prison were not enough to shut him out from research, for he experimented with the straw of his cell, and learned valuable lessons about the relative strength of tubes and rods of equal diameters. For ages astronomers had been familiar with the rings of Saturn, and regarded them merely as curious exceptions to the supposed law of planetary formation; but Laplace saw that, instead of

being exceptions, they are the sole remaining visible evidences of certain stages in the invariable process of star manufacture, and from their mute testimony he added a valuable chapter to the scientific history of Creation. There was not a sailor in Europe who had not wondered what might lie beyond the Western Ocean, but it remained for Columbus to steer boldly out into an unknown sea and discover a new world. Innumerable apples had fallen from trees, often hitting heedless men on the head as if to set them thinking, but not before Newton did any one realize that they fall to the earth by the same law which holds the planets in their courses, and prevents the momentum of all the atoms in the universe from hurling them wildly back to chaos. Lightning had dazzled the eyes, and thunder had jarred the ears of men since the days of Adam, in the vain attempt to call their attention to the all-pervading and tremendous energy of electricity; but the discharges of Heaven's artillery were seen and heard only by the eye and ear of terror until Franklin, by a simple experiment, proved that lightning is but one manifestation of a resistless yet controllable force, abundant as air and water.

Like many others, these men are considered great, simply because they improved opportunities common to the whole human race. Read the story of any successful man and mark its moral, told thousands of years ago of Solomon: "Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings." This proverb is well illustrated by the career of the industrious Franklin, for he stood before five kings and dined with two.

He who improves an opportunity sows a seed which will yield fruit in opportunity for himself and others. Every one who has labored honestly in the past has aided to place knowledge and comfort within the reach of a constantly increasing number.

Captain Herndon appreciated the value of the opportunity he had neglected when it was beyond his reach, but of what avail was the bitterness of his self-reproach when his last moments came? How many lives were sacrificed to his unintelligent hopefulness and indecision! Like him the feeble, the sluggish, and the purposeless too often see no meaning in the happiest occasions, until too late they learn the old lesson that the mill can never grind with the water which has passed.

Such people are always a little too late or a little too early in everything they attempt. "They have three hands apiece," said John B. Gough; "a right hand, a left hand, and a little behindhand." As boys, they were late at school, and unpunctual in their home duties. That is the way the habit is acquired; and now, when responsibility claims them, they think that if they had only gone yesterday they would have obtained the situation, or they can probably get one to-morrow. They remember plenty of chances to make money, or know how to make it some other time than *now;* they see how to improve themselves or help others in the future, but perceive no opportunity in the present. They are always at the pool, but somehow, when the angel troubles the water, there is no one to put them in. They cannot *seize their opportunity.*

Joe Stoker, rear brakeman on the——accommodation train, was exceedingly popular with all the railroad men. The passengers liked him, too, for he was eager to please and always ready to answer questions. But he did not realize the full responsibility of his position. He "took the world easy," and occasionally tippled; and if any one remonstrated, he would

give one of his brightest smiles, and reply in such a good-natured way that the friend would think he had overestimated the danger: "Thank you. I'm all right. Don't you worry."

One evening there was a heavy snowstorm, and his train was delayed. Joe complained of extra duties because of the storm, and slyly sipped occasional draughts from a flat bottle. Soon he became quite jolly; but the conductor and engineer of the train were both vigilant and anxious.

Between two stations the train came to a quick halt. The engine had blown out its cylinder head, and an express was due in a few minutes upon the same track. The conductor hurried to the rear car, and ordered Joe back with a red light. The brakeman laughed and said:

"There's no hurry. Wait till I get my overcoat."

The conductor answered gravely, "Don't stop a minute, Joe. The express is due."

"All right," said Joe, smilingly. The conductor then hurried forward to the engine.

But the brakeman did not go at once. He stopped to put on his overcoat. Then he took another sip from the flat bottle to keep the cold

out. Then he slowly grasped the lantern and, whistling, moved leisurely down the track.

He had not gone ten paces before he heard the puffing of the express. Then he ran for the curve, but it was too late. In a horrible minute the engine of the express had telescoped the standing train, and the shrieks of the mangled passengers mingled with the hissing escape of steam.

Later on, when they asked for Joe, he had disappeared; but the next day he was found in a barn, delirious, swinging an empty lantern in front of an imaginary train, and crying, "Oh, that I had!"

He was taken home, and afterward to an asylum, for this is a true story, and there is no sadder sound in that sad place than the unceasing moan, "Oh, that I had!" "Oh, that I had!" of the unfortunate brakeman, whose criminal indulgence brought disaster to many lives.

"Oh, that I had!" or "Oh, that I had not!" is the silent cry of many a man who would give life itself for the opportunity to go back and retrieve some long-past error.

The new is supplanting the old everywhere. The machinery of ten years ago must soon be

sold as old iron to make room for something more efficient. The methods of our fathers are daily giving place to better systems. Those who have devoted their lives to the cause of labor and progress are constantly falling in the ranks; and, as the struggle grows more intense, men and women with even stronger arms and truer hearts are needed to take the vacant places in the Battle of Life.

Born in an age and country in which knowledge and opportunity abound as never before, how can you sit with folded hands, asking God's aid in work for which He has already given you the necessary faculties and strength?

With the world full of work that needs to be done; with human nature so constituted that often a pleasant word or a trifling assistance may stem the tide of disaster for some fellowman, or clear his path to success; with our own faculties so arranged that in honest, earnest, persistent endeavor we find our highest good; and with countless noble examples to encourage us to dare and to do, each moment brings us to the threshold of some new opportunity.

Don't *wait* for your opportunity. Make it, as *every man must*, who would accomplish *anything* worth the effort. Golden opportunities

are nothing to laziness, but industry makes the commonest chances golden.

"There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries;
And we must take the current when it serves,
Or lose our ventures."

"'T is never offered twice; seize, then, the hour
When fortune smiles, and duty points the way;
Nor shrink aside to 'scape the spectre fear,
Nor pause, though pleasure beckon from her bower;
But bravely bear thee onward to the goal."

CHAPTER II

Boys With No Chance

In the blackest soils grow the fairest flowers, and the loftiest and strongest trees spring heavenward among the rocks.—J. G. HOLLAND.

Poverty is very terrible, and sometimes kills the very soul within us, but it is the north wind that lashes men into Vikings; it is the soft, luscious south wind which lulls them to lotus dreams.—OUIDA.

Want is a bitter and a hateful good,
Because its virtues are not understood;
Yet many things, impossible to thought,
Have been by need to full perfection brought.
The daring of the soul proceeds from thence—
Sharpness of wit and active diligence.
Prudence at once and fortitude it gives,
And if in patience taken, mends our lives.—DRYDEN.

Poverty is the sixth sense.—GERMAN PROVERB.

It is not every calamity that is a curse, and early adversity is often a blessing. Surmounted difficulties not only teach, but hearten us in our future struggles.—SHARPE.

There can be no doubt that the captains of industry today, using that term in its broadest sense, are men who began life as poor boys.—SETH LOW.

"*I* AM a child of the court," said a pretty

little girl at a children's party in Denmark; "*my* father is Groom of the Chambers, which is a very high office. And those whose names end with 'sen,'" she added, "can never be anything at all. We must put our arms akimbo, and make the elbows quite pointed, so as to keep these 'sen' people at a great distance."

"But my papa can buy a hundred dollars' worth of bonbons, and give them away to children," angrily exclaimed the daughter of the rich merchant Peter*sen*. "Can your papa do that?"

"Yes," chimed in the daughter of an editor, "my papa can put your papa and everybody's papa into the newspaper. All sorts of people are afraid of him, my papa says, for he can do as he likes with the paper."

"Oh, if I could be one of them!" thought a little boy peeping through the crack of the door, by permission of the cook for whom he had been turning the spit. But no, *his* parents had not even a penny to spare, and his name ended in "sen."

Years afterwards, when the children of the party had become men and women, some of them went to see a splendid house, filled with all kinds of beautiful and valuable objects.

There they met the owner, once the very boy who thought it so great a privilege to peep at them through a crack in the door as they played. He had become the great sculptor Thorwald*sen*.

This sketch is adapted from a story by a poor Danish cobbler's boy, whose name did not keep him from becoming famous,—Hans Christian Ander*sen*.

"There is no fear of my starving, father," said the deaf boy, Kitto, begging to be taken from the poorhouse and allowed to struggle for an education; "we are in the midst of plenty, and I know how to prevent hunger. The Hottentots subsist a long time on nothing but a little gum; they also, when hungry, tie a ligature around their bodies. Cannot I do so, too? The hedges furnish blackberries and nuts, and the fields, turnips; a hayrick will make an excellent bed."

This poor deaf boy with a drunken father, who was thought capable of nothing better than making shoes as a pauper, became one of the greatest biblical scholars in the world. His first book was written in the workhouse.

The Athenians erected a statue to Æsop, who was born a slave, that men might know that the way to honor is open to all. In Greece,

wealth and immortality were the sure reward of the man who could distinguish himself in art, literature, or war. No other country ever did so much to encourage and inspire struggling merit. Genius, achievement, beauty, were worshiped by the Greeks.

"I was born in poverty," said Vice-President Henry Wilson. "Want sat by my cradle. I know what it is to ask a mother for bread when she has none to give. I left my home at ten years of age, and served an apprenticeship of eleven years, receiving a month's schooling each year, and, at the end of eleven years of hard work, a yoke of oxen and six sheep, which brought me eighty-four dollars. I never spent the sum of one dollar for pleasure, counting every penny from the time I was born till I was twenty-one years of age. I know what it is to travel weary miles and ask my fellow men to give me leave to toil. . . . In the first month after I was twenty-one years of age, I went into the woods, drove a team, and cut mill-logs. I rose in the morning before daylight and worked hard till after dark, and received the magnificent sum of six dollars for the month's work! Each of these dollars looked as large to me as the moon looks to-night."

Mr. Wilson determined to never lose an opportunity for self-culture or self-advancement. Few men knew so well the value of spare moments. *He seized them as though they were gold* and would not let one pass until he had wrung from it every possibility. He managed to read a thousand good books before he was twenty-one—what a lesson for boys on a farm! When he left the farm he started on foot for Natick, Mass., over one hundred miles distant, to learn the cobbler's trade. He went through Boston that he might see Bunker Hill monument and other historical landmarks. The whole trip cost him but one dollar and six cents. In a year he was at the head of a debating club at Natick. Before eight years had passed, he made his great speech against slavery, in the Massachusetts Legislature. Twelve years later he stood shoulder to shoulder with the polished Sumner in Congress. With him, *every occasion was a great occasion.* He ground every circumstance of his life into material for success.

One of the first things that attracts the attention on entering George W. Child's private office in Philadelphia is this motto, which was the key-note of the success of a boy who started with "no chance:" "Nihil sine labore." It

was his early ambition to own the "Philadelphia Ledger" and the great building in which it was published; but how could a poor boy working for $2.00 a week ever hope to own such a great paper? However, he had great determination and indomitable energy; and as soon as he had saved a few hundred dollars as a clerk in a bookstore, he began business as a publisher. He made "great hits" in some of the works he published, such as "Kane's Arctic Expedition." He had a keen sense of what would please the public, and there seemed no end to his industry.

In spite of the fact that the "Ledger" was losing money every day, his friends could not dissuade him from buying it, and in eighteen hundred sixty-four the dreams of his boyhood found fulfillment. He doubled the subscription price, lowered the advertising rates, to the astonishment of everybody, and the paper entered upon a career of remarkable prosperity, the profits sometimes amounting to over four hundred thousand dollars a year. He always refused to lower the wages of his employes even when every other establishment in Philadelphia was doing so.

At a banquet in Lyons, nearly a century and

a half ago, a discussion arose in regard to the meaning of a painting representing some scene in the mythology or history of Greece. Seeing that the discussion was growing warm, the host turned to one of the waiters and asked him to explain the picture. Greatly to the surprise of the company, the servant gave a clear and concise account of the whole subject, so plain and convincing that it at once settled the dispute.

"In what school have you studied, Monsieur?" asked one of the guests, addressing the waiter with great respect. "I have studied in many schools, Monseigneur," replied the young servant: "but the school in which I studied longest and learned most is the school of adversity." Well had he profited by poverty's lessons; for, although then but a poor waiter, all Europe soon rang with the fame of the writings of the greatest genius of his age and country, Jean Jacques Rousseau.

The smooth sand beach of Lake Erie constituted the foolscap on which, for want of other material, P. R. Spencer, a barefoot boy with no chance, perfected the essential principles of the Spencerian system of penmanship, the most beautiful exposition of graphic art.

With thirteen halfpence in his pocket William Cobbett started on foot to find work in the King's Gardens at Kew. "When my little fortune had been reduced to threepence," he says, "I was trudging through Richmond in my blue smock-frock and my red garters tied under my knees, when, staring about me, my eyes fell upon a little book in a bookseller's window, on the outside of which was written, 'The Tale of a Tub. Price 3d.' The title was so odd that my curiosity was excited. I had threepence, but then I could not have any supper. In I went and got the little book, which I was so impatient to read, that I got over into a field at the upper corner of Kew Gardens, where there stood a haystack." Here he read until he fell asleep, to be awakened by the birds at dawn. He found work at Kew, and for eight years followed the plough, when he ran away to London, copied law papers for eight or nine months, and enlisted in an infantry regiment. During his first year of soldier life he subscribed to a circulating library at Chatham, read every book in it, and began to study.

"I learned grammar when I was a private soldier on the pay of sixpence a day. The edge of my berth, or that of the guard-bed, was my

seat to study in; my knapsack was my book-case; a bit of board lying on my lap was my writing-table, and the task did not demand anything like a year of my life. I had no money to purchase candles or oil; in winter it was rarely that I could get any evening light but that of the fire, and only my turn, even, of that. To buy a pen or a sheet of paper I was compelled to forego some portion of my food, though in a state of half starvation. I had no moment of time that I could call my own, and I had to read and write amidst the talking, laughing, singing, whistling, and bawling of at least half a score of the most thoughtless of men, and that, too, in the hours of their freedom from all control. Think not lightly of the *farthing* I had to give, now and then, for pen, ink, or paper. That farthing was, alas! a great sum to me. I was as tall as I am now, and I had great health and great exercise. The whole of the money not expended for us at market was *twopence a week* for each man. I remember, and well I may! that upon one occasion I had, after all absolutely necessary expenses, on a Friday, made shift to have a half-penny in reserve, which I had destined for the purchase of a red herring in the morning, but when I

pulled off my clothes at night, so hungry then as to be hardly able to endure life, I found that I had lost my half-penny. I buried my head under the miserable sheet and rug, and cried like a child."

But Cobbett made even his poverty and hard circumstances serve his all-absorbing passion for knowledge and success. "If I," said he, "under such circumstances could encounter and overcome this task, is there, can there be in the whole world, a youth to find any excuse for its non-performance?"

"May I have a holiday to-morrow, father?" asked Theodore Parker one August afternoon. The poor Lexington millwright looked in surprise at his youngest son, for it was a busy time, but he saw from the boy's earnest face that he had no ordinary object in view, and granted the request. Theodore rose very early the next morning, walked through the dust ten miles to Harvard College, and presented himself as a candidate for admission. He had been unable to attend school regularly since he was eight years old, but he had managed to go three months each winter, and had reviewed his lessons again and again as he followed the plough or worked at other tasks. All his odd

moments had been hoarded, too, for reading useful books, which he borrowed. One book he could not borrow, but he felt that he must have it; so on summer mornings he rose long before the sun and picked bushel after bushel of berries, which he sent to Boston, and so got the money to buy that coveted Latin dictionary.

"Well done, my boy!" said the millwright, when his son came home late at night and told of his successful examination; "but, Theodore, I cannot afford to keep you there!" "True, father," said Theodore, "I am not going to stay there; I shall study at home, at odd times, and thus prepare myself for a final examination, which will give me a diploma." He did this; and, by teaching school as he grew older, got money to study for two years at Harvard, where he was graduated with honor. Years after, when, as the trusted friend and adviser of Seward, Chase, Sumner, Garrison, Horace Mann, and Wendell Phillips, his influence for good was felt in the hearts of all his countrymen, it was a pleasure for him to recall his early struggles and triumphs among the rocks and bushes of Lexington.

"No outfit, no capital to start with? Young man, go down to the library and get some

books, and read of what wonderful mechanism God gave you in your hand, in your foot, in your eye, in your ear, and then ask some doctor to take you into the dissecting-room and illustrate to you what you have read about, and never again commit the blasphemy of saying you have no capital to start with. *Equipped? Why, the poorest young man is equipped as only the God of the whole universe could afford to equip him.*"

What nonsense for two uneducated and unknown youths who met in a cheap boarding-house in Boston, to array themselves against an institution whose roots were embedded in the very constitution of our country, and which was upheld by scholars, statesmen, churches, wealth, and aristocracy, without distinction of creed or politics! What chance had they against the prejudices and sentiment of a nation? But these young men were fired by a lofty purpose, and they were thoroughly in earnest. One of them, Benjamin Lundy, had already started in Ohio a paper called "The Genius of Universal Liberty," and had carried the entire edition home on his back from the printing-office, twenty miles, every month. He had walked four hundred miles on his way to Tennessee to

increase his subscription list. He was no ordinary young man.

With William Lloyd Garrison, he started to prosecute his work more earnestly in Baltimore. The sight of the slave-pens along the principal streets; of vessel-loads of unfortunates torn from home and family and sent to Southern ports; the heartrending scenes at the auction blocks, made an impression on Garrison never to be forgotten; and the young man whose mother was too poor to send him to school, although she early taught him to hate oppression, resolved to devote his life to secure the freedom of these poor wretches.

In the very first issue of his paper, Garrison urged an immediate emancipation, and called down upon his head the wrath of the entire community. He was arrested and sent to jail. John G. Whittier, a noble Friend in the North, was so touched at the news that, being too poor to furnish the money himself, he wrote to Henry Clay, begging him to release Garrison by paying the fine. After forty-nine days of imprisonment he was set free. Wendell Phillips said of him, "He was imprisoned for his opinion when he was twenty-four. He had confronted a nation in the bloom of his youth."

Garrison did not propose to lose his time just because he was imprisoned. While in jail, he prepared several lectures; but what could he do with them? Churches and halls were closed to him; but he was not to be suppressed. In Boston, with no money, friends, or influence, in a little upstairs room, he started the "Liberator." Read the declaration of this poor young man with "no chance," in the very first issue: "I will be as harsh as truth, as uncompromising as justice. I am in earnest. I will not equivocate, I will not excuse; I will not retreat a single inch, and I will be heard." What audacity for a young man, with the world against him!

Hon. Robert Y. Hayne, of South Carolina, wrote to Otis, mayor of Boston, that some one had sent him a copy of the "Liberator," and asked him to ascertain the name of the publisher. Otis replied that he had found a poor young man printing "this insignificant sheet in an obscure hole, his only auxiliary a negro boy, his supporters a few persons of all colors and little influence."

But this poor young man, eating, sleeping, and printing in this "obscure hole," had set the world to thinking, and must be suppressed.

The Vigilance Association of South Carolina offered a reward of fifteen hundred dollars for the arrest and prosecution of any one detected circulating the "Liberator." The governors of one or two States set a price on the editor's head. The legislature of Georgia offered a reward of five thousand dollars for his arrest and conviction.

The youth with no chance had stirred up a nation. Twelve "Fanatics" met one stormy night in the basement of the African church in Boston and organized the New England Anti-Slavery Society. The contest grew bitter. Prudence Crandall admitted a few colored girls to her school in Connecticut, patronized by wealthy people residing in Boston and New York, and hoodlums filled her well with refuse. Merchants refused to sell her anything, and a midnight mob threatened to destroy the school-house and lay violent hands upon the teacher. Garrison and his coadjutors were denounced everywhere. A clergyman named Lovejoy was killed by a mob in Illinois for espousing the cause, while defending his printing-press, and in the old "Cradle of American Liberty" the wealth, power, and culture of Massachusetts arrayed itself against the "Abolitionists" so

outrageously, that a mere spectator, a young lawyer of great promise, asked to be lifted upon the high platform, and replied in such a speech as was never before heard in Faneuil Hall. "When I heard the gentleman lay down principles which place the murderers of Lovejoy at Alton side by side with Otis and Hancock, with Quincy and Adams," said Wendell Phillips, pointing to their portraits on the walls, "I thought those pictured lips would have broken into voice to rebuke the recreant American, the slanderer of the dead. For the sentiments that he has uttered, on soil consecrated by the prayers of the Puritans and the blood of patriots, the earth should have yawned and swallowed him up."

The whole nation was wrought to fever heat. Charles Sumner was stricken down in the United States Senate by a blow from Preston S. Brooks, of South Carolina, for his speech against the extension of slavery in Kansas. That State came into being amid the "very tempest and whirlwind of passion," the slave-holding oligarchy "colonizing voters" with all its might, while from New England's hills emigrants poured westward by thousands, singing Whittier's lines:—

We cross the prairie as of old
The Pilgrims crossed the sea,
To make the West, as they the East
The homestead of the free!"

Between the Northern pioneers and Southern chivalry the struggle was long and fierce even in far California. The drama culminated in the shock of civil war. When the war was ended, and, after thirty-five years of untiring, heroic conflict, Garrison was invited as the nation's guest, by President Lincoln, to see the stars and stripes unfurled once more above Fort Sumter, an emancipated slave delivered the address of welcome, and his two daughters, no longer chattels, presented Garrison with a beautiful wreath of flowers.

About this time Richard Cobden, another powerful friend of the oppressed, died in London. John Bright afterwards unveiled a marble statue in Bradford, England, bearing in bold letters the word "Cobden," encircled by the inscription: "Free Trade, Peace and Good Will among Men."

"What has been done can be done again," said the boy with no chance who became Lord Beaconsfield, England's great Prime Minister. "I am not a slave, I am not a captive, and

by energy I can overcome greater obstacles." Jewish blood flowed in his veins and everything seemed against him, but he remembered the example of Joseph, who became Prime Minister of Egypt four thousand years before, and that of Daniel, who was Prime Minister to the greatest despot of the world five centuries before the birth of Christ. He pushed his way up through the lower classes, up through the middle classes, up through the upper classes, until he stood a master, self-poised upon the topmost round of political and social power. Rebuffed, scorned, ridiculed, hissed down in the House of Commons, he simply said, "The time will come when you will hear me." The time did come, and the boy with no chance but a determined will, swayed the sceptre of England for a quarter of a century.

Henry Clay, the "mill-boy of the slashes," was one of seven children of a widow too poor to send him to any but a common country school, where he was drilled only in the "three R's." But he used every spare moment to study without a teacher, and in after years he was a king among self-made men. The boy who had learned to speak in a barn, with only a cow and a horse for an audience, became

one of the greatest of American orators and statesmen.

How slender seemed the chance of James Sharples, the celebrated blacksmith artist of England! He was very poor, but he often rose at three o'clock to copy books he could not buy. He would walk eighteen miles to Manchester and back after a hard day's work, to buy a shilling's worth of artist's materials. He would ask for the heaviest work in the blacksmith shop, because it took a longer time to beat at the forge, and he could thus have many spare minutes to study the precious book, which he propped up against the chimney. He was a great miser of spare moments and used every one as though he might never see another. He devoted his leisure hours for five years to that wonderful production, "The Forge," copies of which are to be seen in many a home.

George Stephenson was one of eight children whose parents were so poor that all lived in a single room. George had to watch cows for a neighbor, but he managed to get time to make engines of clay, with hemlock sticks for pipes. At seventeen he had charge of an engine, with his father for fireman. He could neither read

nor write, but the engine was his teacher, and he a faithful student. While the other hands were playing games or loafing in liquor shops during the holidays, George was taking his machine to pieces, cleaning it, studying it, and making experiments in engines. When he had become famous as a great inventor of improvements in engines, those who had loafed and played called him lucky.

Without a charm of face or figure, Charlotte Cushman resolved to place herself in the front rank as an actress, even in such characters as Rosalind and Queen Katherine. The star actress was unable to perform, and Miss Cushman, her understudy, took her place. That night she held her audience with such grasp of intellect and iron will that it forgot the absence of mere dimpled feminine grace. Although poor, friendless, and unknown before, when the curtain fell upon her first performance at the London theatre, her reputation was made. In after years, when physicians told her that she had a terrible, incurable disease, she flinched not a particle, but quietly said, "I have learned to live with my trouble."

A poor colored woman in a log cabin in the South had three boys, but could afford only

one pair of trousers for the three. She was so anxious to give them an education, that she sent them to school by turns. The teacher, a Northern girl, noticed that each boy came to school only one day out of three, and that all wore the same pantaloons. The poor mother educated her boys as best she could. One became a professor in a Southern college, another a physician, and the third a clergyman. What a lesson for boys who plead "no chance" as an excuse for wasted lives!

"I want a Greek Testament," said John Brown of Carpow, Scotland, to a bookseller at St. Andrew's. The dealer stared at the shepherd boy, rough and unkempt from a night walk of twenty miles to buy a book, and had begun to make sport of so strange a request from a small country lad, when a college professor entered. "Now," said the professor, after learning what John wanted, "if you will read a verse of that Testament and translate it to me, you shall have the book for nothing." The boy translated several verses with ease and marched proudly home with his prize. He had mastered both Greek and Latin while tending his flock, and laid the foundation for the ripe scholarship for which he became noted.

Among the world's greatest heroes and benefactors are many others whose cradles were rocked by want in lowly cottages, and who buffeted the billows of fate without dependence, save upon the mercy of God and their own energies.

"The little gray cabin appears to be the birthplace of all your great men," said an English author who had been looking over a book of biographies of eminent Americans.

With five chances on each hand and *one unwavering aim*, no boy, however poor, need despair. There is bread and success for every youth under the American flag, who has energy and ability to *seize his opportunity*. It matters not whether the boy is born in a log-cabin or in a mansion; if he is dominated by a resolute purpose, and upholds himself, neither men nor demons can keep him down.

The rich man's son inherits lands,
And piles of brick and stone and gold,
And he inherits soft white hands,
And tender flesh that fears the cold,
Nor dare he wear a garment old:
A heritage, it seems to me,
One scarce would wish to hold in fee.

The rich man's son inherits cares;
  The bank may break, the factory burn,
A breath may burst his bubble-shares;
  Then, soft white hands could hardly earn
A living that would serve his turn.

What doth the poor man's son inherit?
  Stout muscles, and a sinewy heart,
A hardy frame, a hardier spirit!
  King of two hands, he does his part
In every useful toil and art:
  A heritage it seems to me,
A king might wish to hold in fee.

LOWELL.

CHAPTER III

An Iron Will

The truest wisdom is a resolute determination.

—NAPOLEON I.

He wants wit, that wants resolved will.—SHAKESPEARE.

When a firm decisive spirit is recognized, it is curious to see how the space clears around a man and leaves him room and freedom.—JOHN FOSTER.

A strong, defiant purpose is many-handed, and lays hold of whatever is near that can serve it; it has a magnetic power that draws to itself whatever is kindred.—T. T. MUNGER.

People do not lack strength; they lack will.—VICTOR HUGO.

In idle wishes fools supinely stay;
Be there a will, and wisdom finds a way.—CRABBE.

"I CAN'T! it is impossible!" said a lieutenant to Alexander, after failing to take a rock-crested fortress. "Begone!" thundered the great Macedonian; "there is nothing impossible to him who will try;" and at the head of a phalanx he swept the foe from the strong hold.

"You can only half will," Suwarrow would say to people who failed. He preached willing as a system. "I don't know," "I can't," and

"impossible" he would not listen to. "Learn!" "Do!" "Try!" he would exclaim.

Napoleon in Egypt visited those sick with the plague, to show that a man who is never afraid can vanquish that scourge. A will power like this is a strong tonic to the body, and it will stimulate to almost superhuman undertakings. Such a will has taken many men from apparent death-beds, and enabled them to perform wonderful deeds of valor.

Professor George Wilson, of Edinburgh University, was so fragile that no one thought he ever could amount to much; but he became a noted scholar in spite of discouragements which would have daunted most men of the strongest constitutions. Disaster, amputation of one foot, consumption, frightful hemorrhages,—nothing could shake his imperious will. Death itself seemed to stand aghast before that mighty resolution, hesitating to take possession of the body after all else had fled.

At fifty-five years of age, Sir Walter Scott owed more than six hundred thousand dollars. He determined that every dollar should be paid. This iron resolution gave confidence and inspiration to the other faculties and functions of the body and brain. Every nerve and fibre said,

"*The debt must be paid;*" every drop of blood caught the inspiration and rushed to the brain to add its weight of force to the power which wielded the pen. And the debt was paid. In his diary he wrote "I have suffered terribly and often wished that I could lie down and sleep without waking. But I will fight it out if I can." His imperious will worked on and on after it seemed that every other faculty had abandoned his mind.

"Nothing is impossible to the man who can will," said Mirabeau. "Is that necessary? then that shall be. This is the only law of success."

"We have a half belief," said Emerson, "that the person is possible who can counterpoise all other persons. We believe that there may be a man *who is a match for events*,—one who never found his match,—against whom other men being dashed are broken,—one who can give you any odds and beat you."

"There are three kinds of people in the world," says a writer in the "Eclectic Magazine," "the wills, the won'ts, and the can'ts. The first accomplish everything; the second oppose everything; the third fail in everything."

The shores of fortune, as Foster says, are covered with the stranded wrecks of men of

brilliant ability, but who have wanted courage, faith, and decision, and have therefore perished in sight of more resolute but less capable adventurers, who succeeded in making port. Hundreds of men go to their graves in obscurity, who have been obscure only because they lacked the pluck to make a first effort; and who, could they only have resolved to begin, would have astonished the world by their achievements and successes.

Quentin Matsys despaired of becoming a painter, although desperately in love with his master's daughter; but when told that he could not marry her unless he produced a picture of merit, he went to work with a will which knows no defeat, and painted the "Misers," one of the masterpieces of art. It is such intensity of purpose that accomplishes the "*impossible.*"

Balzac's father tried to discourage his son from the pursuit of literature. "Do you know," said he, "that in literature a man must be either a king or a beggar!" "Very well," replied the boy, "*I will be a king.*" His parents left him to his fate in a garret. For ten years he fought terrible battles with hardship and poverty, but won a great victory at last.

Who could look into the pale, emaciated face

of Rufus Choate without seeing the mighty conflict raging between the mind and the body, or realizing that death was held at bay by an unconquerable will? When a friend remonstrated with him for injuring his constitution, he replied, "Good heavens! my constitution was gone long ago, and I am living on the by-laws." A parallel example is that of William M. Evarts. For many years it has seemed as though life has been held in his emaciated body solely by the exercise of his indomitable will-power. Robert Hall made a miserable failure of his first sermon, and cried like a child in the pulpit. The second sermon was worse yet, but perseverance finally made him the great pulpit orator of England.

When asked why he repaired a magistrate's bench with so unusual care, a carpenter replied, "Because I wish to make it easy against the time when I come to sit on it myself." In a few years he did sit as a magistrate on that bench.

"Impossible," said Napoleon, "is a word found only in the dictionary of fools." He would have melted the rocks of St. Helena before he would have remained a prisoner there, had he not lost that imperious will before which all Europe trembled.

When General Grant took command of the Northern armies, the Confederates knew that their doom was sealed, for in that mighty will they felt the grip of Fate. "*On to Richmond!*" was his watchword. Old commanders shook their heads, but the silent man with the iron will, who never knew when he was beaten, swerved not a hair's breadth from his purpose until Lee surrendered his sword at Appomattox.

At the close of the Revolutionary War, that consummate debater and unequaled master of sarcasm, the younger Pitt, began his long administration as Prime Minister of England. His policy was strongly opposed to the French Revolution. But at the end of many successes Austerlitz proved his death-blow. Hearing of Napoleon's victory, he pointed to a map of Europe and said, "Roll up that chart; it will not be wanted these ten years." He then fell into a stupor, from which he awoke but once, murmuring faintly, "Alas, my country!" Napoleon's supreme will had overborne and crushed a mind and will of the very highest order; a mind sagacious enough to measure very accurately the force of events, as it was, almost to a day, ten years to Waterloo.

What a mighty will Darwin had! He was in

continual ill health. He was in constant suffering. His patience was marvelous. No one but his wife knew what he endured. "For forty years," says his son, "he never knew one day of health;" yet during those forty years he unremittingly forced himself to do the work from which the mightiest minds and the strongest constitutions would have shrunk. He had a wonderful power of sticking to a subject. He used almost to apologize for his patience, saying that he could not bear to be beaten, as if it were a sign of weakness. One of his favorite sayings was: "*It's dogged that does it.*" A proof of his wonderful patience, perseverance, and carefulness is that he collected his material for his "Origin of Species" during twenty years, and for his "Descent of Man" during nearly thirty.

Tupper may be a little old-fashioned, but he has written four lines which can never die:—

"Confidence is conqueror of men; victorious both
over them and in them;
The iron will of one stout heart shall make
a thousand quail;
A feeble dwarf, dauntlessly resolved, will turn
the tide of battle,
And rally to a nobler strife the giants that had fled."

CHAPTER IV

What Career?

Brutes find out where their talents lie;
A bear will not attempt to fly,
A foundered horse will oft debate
Before he tries a five-barred gate.
A dog by instinct turns aside
Who sees the ditch too deep and wide.
But man we find the only creature
Who, led by folly, combats nature;
Who, when she loudly cries—forbear!
With obstinacy fixes there;
And where his genius least inclines,
Absurdly bends his whole designs—SWIFT.

Whatever you are by nature, keep to it; never desert your line of talent. Be what nature intended you for, and you will succeed; be anything else, and you will be ten thousand times worse than nothing.—SYDNEY SMITH.

In the measure in which thou seekest to do thy duty shalt thou know what is in thee. But what is thy duty? The demand of the hour.—GOETHE.

YOUR talent is your *call*. Your legitimate destiny speaks in your character.

If you have found your place, your occupation has the consent of every faculty of your being.

If possible, choose that occupation which focuses the largest amount of your experience and tastes. You will then not only have a congenial vocation, but will utilize largely your skill and business knowledge, which is your true capital.

Follow your bent. You cannot long fight successfully against your aspirations. Parents, friends, or misfortune may stifle and suppress the longings of the heart, by compelling you to perform unwelcome tasks; but, like a volcano, the inner fire will burst the crusts which confine it and pour forth its pent-up genius in eloquence, in song, in art, or in some favorite industry. Beware of "a talent which you cannot hope to practice in perfection." Nature hates all botched and half-finished work, and will pronounce her curse upon it.

Better be the Napoleon of bootblacks, or the Alexander of chimney-sweeps, let us say with Matthew Arnold, than a shallow-brained attorney who, like necessity, knows no law.

"The ignorance of men who know not for what time and to what thing they be fit," said Roger Ascham, "causeth some to wish themselves rich for whom it were better a great deal to be poor; some to desire to be in the court,

which be born and be fitter rather for the cart; some to be masters and rule others, who never yet began to rule themselves; some to teach, which rather should learn; some to be priests, which were fitter to be clerks."

Half the world seems to have found uncongenial occupation, as if the human race had been shaken up together and exchanged places in the operation. A servant girl is trying to teach, and a natural teacher is tending store. Good farmers are murdering the law, while Choates and Websters are running down farms, each tortured by the consciousness of unfulfilled destiny. Boys are pining in factories who should be wrestling with Greek and Latin, and hundreds are chafing beneath unnatural loads in college who should be on the farm or before the mast. Artists are spreading "daubs" on canvas who should be whitewashing board fences. Behind counters stand clerks who hate the yard-stick, and neglect their work to dream of other occupations. A good shoemaker writes a few verses for the village paper, his friends call him a poet, and the last, with which he is familiar, is abandoned for the pen which he uses awkwardly. Other shoemakers are cobbling in Congress, while statesmen are pound-

ing shoe-lasts. Laymen are murdering sermons while Beechers and Whitefields are failing as merchants, and people are wondering what can be the cause of empty pews. A boy who is always making something with tools is railroaded through the university and started on the road to inferiority in one of the three honorable professions. Real surgeons are handling the meat-saw and cleaver, while butchers are amputating human limbs. How fortunate that—

> "There 's a divinity that shapes our ends,
> *Rough-hew them how we will.*"

"He that hath a trade," says Franklin, "hath an estate; and he that hath a calling hath a place of profit and honor. A ploughman on his legs is higher than a gentleman on his knees."

A man's business does more to make him than anything else. It hardens his muscles, strengthens his body, quickens his blood, sharpens his mind, corrects his judgment, wakes up his inventive genius, puts his wits to work, starts him on the race of life, arouses his ambition, makes him feel that he is a man and must fill a man's shoes, do a man's work, bear a man's part in life, and show himself a man in that part. No man feels himself a man who is

not doing a man's business. A man without employment is not a man. He does not prove by his works that he is a man. A hundred and fifty pounds of bone and muscle do not make a man. A good cranium full of brains is not a man. The bone and muscle and brain must know how to do a man's work, think a man's thoughts, mark out a man's path, and bear a man's weight of character and duty before they constitute a man.

"No man is fit to win," says Bulwer, "who has not sat down alone to think; and who has not come forth with purpose in his eye, with white cheeks, set lips, and clenched palms, able to say: 'I am resolved what to do.'"

Go-at-it-iveness is the first requisite for success. Stick-to-it-iveness is the second. Under ordinary circumstances, and with practical common sense to guide him, one who has these requisites will not fail.

Don't wait for a higher position or a larger salary. Enlarge the position you already occupy; put originality of method into it. Fill it as it never was filled before. Be more prompt, more energetic, more thorough, more polite than your predecessor or fellow workmen. Study your business, devise new modes of op-

eration, be able to give your employer points. The art lies not in giving satisfaction merely, not in simply filling your place, but in doing better than was expected, in surprising your employer; and the reward will be a better place and a larger salary.

When out of work, take the first respectable job that offers, heeding not the disproportion between your faculties and your task. If you put your manhood into your labor, you will soon be given something better to do.

One of the saddest sights is that of a young man who, without ever having asked himself if he possessed sufficient strength of nerve to endure the strain of an intellectual career, has been graduated heavily in debt, and has sacrificed what little health and constitution he had for a college course. No one told him that, even if he should obtain his degree, he would be totally unfitted to excel in intellectual pursuits, and would be doomed to perpetual mediocrity. He thought that if he could only get through college, even if he were broken in health and in purse, he could get on somehow. He is no longer content with his former lot, his ambition is poisoned by visions of impossible goals, his vitality exhausted, his energies scat-

tered, and so the youth who might have become a useful farmer or a skillful mechanic, staggers under his load of pecuniary obligation, ill health, and unsatisfied ambition, until death relieves him of his misery.

This question of a right aim in life has become exceedingly perplexing in our complicated age. It is not a difficult problem to solve when one is the son of a Zulu or the daughter of a Bedouin. The condition of the savage hardly admits of but one choice; but as one rises higher in the scale of civilization and creeps nearer to the great centres of activity, the difficulty of a correct decision increases with its importance. In proportion as one is hard pressed in competition is it of the sternest necessity for him to choose the right aim, so as to be able to throw the whole of his energy and enthusiasm into the struggle for success. The dissipation of strength or hope is fatal to prosperity even in the most attractive field.

Gladstone says there is a limit to the work that can be got out of a human body, or a human brain, and he is a wise man who wastes no energy on pursuits for which he is not fitted.

In choosing an occupation do not ask yourself how you can make the most money or gain

the most notoriety, but choose that work which will call out all your powers and develop your manhood into the greatest strength and symmetry. Not money, not notoriety, not fame even, but power is what you want. Manhood is greater than wealth, grander than fame. Character is greater than any career. Each faculty must be educated, and any deficiency in its training will appear in whatever you do. The hand must be educated to be graceful, steady, and strong. The eye must be educated to be alert, discriminating, and microscopic. The heart must be educated to be tender, sympathetic, and true. The memory must be drilled for years in accuracy, retention, and comprehensiveness. The world does not demand that you be a lawyer, minister, doctor, farmer, scientist, or merchant. It does not dictate what you shall do, but it does require that you be a master in whatever you undertake. If you are a master in your line, the world will applaud you and all doors will fly open to you. But the world condemns all botches, abortions, and failures.

In the great race of life common sense has the right of way. Wealth, a diploma, a pedigree, talent, genius, without tact and common sense, cut but a small figure. The incapables and the

impracticables, though loaded with diplomas and degrees, are left behind. Not what do you know, or who are you, but what can you do, is the interrogation of the century.

George Herbert has well said: "What we are is much more to us than what we do." An aim that carries in it the least element of doubt as to its justice or honor or right should be abandoned at once. The art of dishing up the wrong so as to make it look and taste like the right, has never been more extensively cultivated than in our day. It is a curious fact that reason will, on pressure, overcome a man's instinct of right. An eminent scientist has said that a man could soon reason himself out of the instinct of decency if he would only take pains and work hard enough. So when a doubtful but attractive future is placed before one, there is a great temptation to juggle with the wrong until it seems the right, just as Hermann or Keller apparently changes a rabbit into an omelet. Yet any aim that is immoral carries in itself the germ of certain failure, in the real sense of the word—failure that is physical and spiritual.

There is no doubt that every person has a special adaptation for his own peculiar part in life. A very few—the geniuses, we call them—

have this marked in an unusual degree, and very early in life.

Madame de Staël was engrossed in political philosophy at an age when other girls are dressing dolls. Mozart, when but four years old, played the clavichord, and composed minuets and other pieces still extant. The little Chalmers would preach often from a stool in the nursery, with solemn air and earnest gestures. Goethe wrote tragedies at twelve, and Grotius published an able philosophical work before he was fifteen. Pope "lisped in numbers." Chatterton wrote good poems at eleven, and Cowley published a volume of poetry in his sixteenth year. Thomas Lawrence and Benjamin West drew likenesses almost as soon as they could walk. Liszt played in public at twelve. Canova made models in clay while a mere child. Bacon exposed the defects of Aristotle's philosophy when but sixteen. Napoleon was at the head of armies when throwing snowballs at Brienne. Kean played Shylock the first night almost as well as he ever did.

All these showed their bent while young, and followed it in active life. But precocity is not common, and, except in rare cases, we must discover the bias in our natures, and not wait

for the proclivity to make itself manifest. When found, it is worth more to us than a vein of gold.

You have not found your place until all your faculties are roused, and your whole nature consents and approves of the work you are doing; not until you are so enthusiastic in it that you take it to bed with you. You may be forced to drudge at uncongenial toil for a time, but emancipate yourself as soon as possible. Carey, the "Consecrated Cobbler," before he went as a missionary said: "My business is to preach the gospel. I cobble shoes to pay expenses."

If your vocation be a humble one, elevate it with more manhood than others put into it. Put into it brains and heart and energy and economy. Broaden it by originality of methods. Extend it by enterprise and industry. Study it as you would a profession. Learn everything that is to be known about it. Concentrate your faculties upon it, for the greatest achievements are reserved for the man of single aim, in whom no rival powers divide the empire of the soul. *Better adorn your own than seek another's place.*

Go to the bottom of your business if you would climb to the top. Nothing is small which

concerns your business. Master every detail. This was the secret of A. T. Stewart's and of John Jacob Astor's great success. They knew everything about their business.

As to the responsibility for our environments which has troubled great minds in all ages, and as to what we shall do, a noted clergyman says: "You are not responsible for your parentage, or grand-parentage. You are not responsible for any of the cranks that may have lived in your ancestral line, and who a hundred years before you were born may have lived a style of life that more or less affects you to-day. You are not responsible for the fact that your temperament is sanguine, or melancholic, or bilious, or lymphatic, or nervous. Neither are you responsible for the place of your nativity, whether among the granite hills of New England, or the cotton plantations of Louisiana, or on the banks of the Clyde, or the Dnieper, or the Shannon, or the Seine. Neither are you responsible for the religion taught in your father's house, or for his religion. Do not bother yourself about what you cannot help, or about circumstances that you did not decree. Take things as they are and decide the question so that you shall be able safely to say: 'To this

end was I born.' How will you decide it? By direct application to the only Being in the universe who is competent to tell you—the Lord Almighty."

A famous Englishman said to his nephew, "Don't choose medicine, for we have never had a murderer in our family, and the chances are that in your ignorance you may kill a patient; as to the law, no prudent man is willing to risk his life or his fortune to a young lawyer, who has not only no experience, but is generally too conceited to know the risks he incurs for his client, who alone is the loser; therefore, as the mistakes of a clergyman in doctrine or advice to his parishioners cannot be clearly determined in this world, I advise you by all means to enter the church."

"I felt that I was in the world to do something, and thought I must," said Whittier, thus giving the secret of his great power. It is the man who must enter law, literature, medicine, the ministry, or any other of the overstocked professions, who will succeed. His certain call, that is his love for it, and his fidelity to it, are the imperious factors of his career. If a man enters a profession simply because his grandfather made a great name in it, or his mother

wants him to, with no love or adaptability for it, it were far better for him to be a motor-man on an electric car at one dollar and seventy-five cents a day. In the humbler work, his intelligence may make him a leader; in the other career he might do as much harm as a boulder rolled from its place upon a railroad track, a menace to the next express.

Dr. Gregory said to his daughters: "If you happen to have any learning, keep it a profound secret from the men, who generally look with a jealous and malignant eye on a woman of great parts and a cultivated understanding." Women who wrote books in those days would deny the charge as though a public disgrace. All this has changed, and what a change it is! As Frances Willard says, the greatest discovery of the century is the discovery of woman. We have emancipated her, and are opening countless opportunities for our girls outside of marriage. Formerly only a boy could choose a career, now his sister can do the same. This freedom is one of the greatest glories of the nineteenth century. But with freedom comes responsibility, and under these changed conditions every girl should have a definite aim.

"Girls, you cheapen yourselves by lack of

purpose in life," says Rena L. Miner. "You show commendable zeal in pursuing your studies; your alertness in comprehending and ability in surmounting difficult problems have become proverbial; nine times out of every ten you outrank your brothers thus far; but when the end is attained, the goal reached, whether it be the graduating certificate from a graded school, or a college diploma, for nine out of every ten it might as well be added thereto, 'dead to further activity,' or, 'sleeping until marriage shall resurrect her.'

"Crocheting, plaquing, dressing, visiting, music, and flirtations make up the sum total for the expense and labor expended for your existence. If forced to earn your support, you are content to stand behind a counter, or teach school term after term in the same grade, while the young men who graduated with you walk up the grades, as up a ladder, to professorship and good salary, from which they swing off into law, physics, or perhaps, the legislative firmament, leaving difficulties and obstacles like nebulæ in their wake. You girls, satisfied with mediocrity, have an eye mainly for the 'main chance'—marriage. If you marry wealthy,—which is marrying well according to the modern

popular idea,—you dress more elegantly, cultivate more fashionable society, leave your thinking for your husband and your minister to do for you, and become in the economy of life but a sentient nonentity. If you are true to the grand passion, and accept with it poverty, you bake, brew, scrub, spank the children, and talk with your neighbor over the back fence for recreation, spending the years literally like the horse in a treadmill, all for the lack of a purpose,—a purpose sufficiently potent to convert the latent talent into a gem of living beauty, a creative force which makes all adjuncts secondary, like planets to their central sun. Choose some one course or calling, and master it in all its details, sleep by it, swear by it, work for it, and, if marriage crowns you, it can but add new glory to your labor."

Dr. Hall says that the world has urgent need of "girls who are mother's right hand; girls who can cuddle the little ones next best to mamma, and smooth out the tangles in the domestic skein when things get twisted; girls whom father takes comfort in for something better than beauty, and the big brothers are proud of for something that outranks the ability to dance or shine in society. Next, we want

girls of sense,—girls who have a standard of their own regardless of conventionalities, and are independent enough to live up to it; girls who simply won't wear a trailing dress on the street to gather up microbes and all sorts of defilement; girls who don't wear a high hat to the theatre, or lacerate their feet and endanger their health with high heels and corsets; girls who will wear what is pretty and becoming and snap their fingers at the dictates of fashion when fashion is horrid and silly. And we want good girls,—girls who are sweet, right straight out from the heart to the lips; innocent and pure and simple girls, with less knowledge of sin and duplicity and evil-doing at twenty than the pert little schoolgirl of ten has all too often. And we want careful girls and prudent girls, who think enough of the generous father who toils to maintain them in comfort, and of the gentle mother who denies herself much that they may have so many pretty things, to count the cost and draw the line between the essentials and non-essentials; girls who strive to save and not to spend; girls who are unselfish and eager to be a joy and a comfort in the home rather than an expense and a useless burden. We want girls with hearts,—girls who are full

of tenderness and sympathy, with tears that flow for other people's ills, and smiles that light outward their own beautiful thoughts. We have lots of clever girls, and brilliant girls, and witty girls. Give us a consignment of jolly girls, warm-hearted and impulsive girls; kind and entertaining to their own folks, and with little desire to shine in the garish world. With a few such girls scattered around, life would freshen up for all of us, as the weather does under the spell of summer showers."

"They talk about a woman's sphere,
As though it had a limit;
There 's not a place in earth or heaven,
There 's not a task to mankind given,
There 's not a blessing or a woe,
There 's not a whisper, Yes or No,
There 's not a life, or death, or birth,
That has a feather's weight of worth,
Without a woman in it."

Whatever you do in life, be greater than your calling. Most people look upon an occupation or calling as a mere expedient for earning a living. What a mean, narrow view to take of what was intended for the great school of life, the great man-developer, the character-builder; that which should broaden, deepen, heighten,

and round out into symmetry, harmony, and beauty, all the God-given faculties within us! How we shrink from the task and evade the lessons which were intended for the unfolding of life's great possibilities into usefulness and power, as the sun unfolds into beauty and fragrance the petals of the flower.

CHAPTER V

Concentrated Energy

This one thing I do.—ST. PAUL.

Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. Turn not to the right hand nor to the left.—PROVERBS.

The man who seeks one thing in life, and but one,
May hope to achieve it before life be done;
But he who seeks all things, wherever he goes,
Only reaps from the hopes which around him he sows,
A harvest of barren regrets.—OWEN MEREDITH.

The longer I live, the more deeply am I convinced that that which makes the difference between one man and another—between the weak and powerful, the great and insignificant, is energy—invincible determination—a purpose once formed, and then death or victory.—FOWELL BUXTON.

"THERE was not room enough for us all in Frankfort," said Nathan Mayer Rothschild, speaking of himself and his four brothers. "I dealt in English goods. One great trader came there, who had the market to himself; he was quite the great man, and did us a favor if he sold us goods. Somehow I offended him, and

he refused to show me his patterns. This was on a Tuesday. I said to my father, 'I will go to England.' On Thursday I started. The nearer I got to England, the cheaper goods were. As soon as I got to Manchester, I laid out all my money, things were so cheap, and I made a good profit."

"I hope," said a listener, "that your children are not too fond of money and business, to the exclusion of more important things. I am sure you would not wish that."

"I am sure I would wish that," said Rothschild; "I wish them to give mind, and soul, and heart, and body, and everything to business; that is the way to be happy." "Stick to one business, young man," he added, addressing a young brewer; "stick to your brewery, and you may be the great brewer of London. But be a brewer, and a banker, and a merchant, and a manufacturer, and you will soon be in the Gazette."

Not many things indifferently, but one thing supremely, is the demand of the hour. He who scatters his efforts in this intense, concentrated age, cannot hope to succeed.

The great difference between those who succeed and those who fail does not consist in the

amount of work done by each, but in the amount of intelligent work. Many of those who fail most ignominiously, do enough to achieve grand success; but they labor at haphazard, building up with one hand only to tear down with the other. They do not grasp circumstances and change them into opportunities. They have no faculty of turning honest defeats into telling victories. With ability enough, and time in abundance,—the warp and woof of success,—they are forever throwing back and forth an empty shuttle, and the real web of life is never woven.

If you ask one of them to state his aim and purpose in life, he will say: "I hardly know yet for what I am best adapted, but I am a thorough believer in genuine hard work, and I am determined to dig early and late all my life, and I know I shall come across something—either gold, silver, or at least iron." I say most emphatically, no. Would an intelligent man dig up a whole continent to find its veins of silver and gold? The man who is forever looking about to see what he can find, never finds anything. We find what we seek with all our heart, and if we look for nothing in particular, we find just that and no more. The bee is not the only

insect that visits the flower, but it is the only one that carries honey away. It matters not how rich the materials we have gleaned from the years of our study and toil in youth, if we go out into life with no well-defined idea of our future work, there is no happy conjunction of circumstances that will arrange them into an imposing structure, and give it magnificent proportions.

The wind never blows fair for that sailor who knows not to what port he is bound.

"The weakest living creature," says Carlyle, "by concentrating his powers on a single object, can accomplish something; whereas the strongest, by dispersing his over many, may fail to accomplish anything. The drop, by continually falling, bores its passage through the hardest rock. The hasty torrent rushes over it with hideous uproar and leaves no trace behind."

"When I was young I used to think it was thunder that killed men," said a shrewd preacher; "but as I grew older, I found it was lightning. So I resolved to thunder less, and lighten more."

This is the age of concentration or specialization of energy. The problem of the day is to

get ten horse-power out of an engine that shall occupy the space of a one horse-power engine and no more. The solution of that problem will solve in its turn the lesser problem of flying. Just so society demands a ten man-power out of one individual. It crowns the man who knows one thing supremely, and can do it better than anybody else, even if it only be the art of raising turnips. If he raises the best turnips by reason of concentrating all his energy to that end, he is a benefactor to the race, and is recognized as such.

The giants of the race have been men of concentration, who have struck sledge-hammer blows in one place until they have accomplished their purpose. The successful men of to-day are men of one overmastering idea, one unwavering aim, men of single and intense purpose. "Scatteration" is the curse of American business life. Too many are like Douglas Jerrold's friend, who could converse in twenty-four languages, but had no ideas to express in any one of them.

One of the hardest tasks for a boy or a girl is to concentrate the whole attention upon the lesson of the morrow; for the student in college to prepare for the next recitation without

running to the ball-field, or allowing his gaze to wander around the room, or doing anything else in order to cheat himself out of what he ought to do. In study, as in business, we must not only strike the iron while it is hot, but strike it until it is made hot.

William A. Mowry tells a story of one of the foremost of American scholars, who found himself spending two hours a day in preparing his Latin lesson. He determined to get that lesson in an hour and fifty minutes, and succeeded. When he afterwards sat down to learn his Latin, he bent every energy to accomplish it in the shortest possible time. He found by daily trials, that he could learn it in an hour and forty-five minutes, and that the time required was diminishing. Concentrating all his powers upon the task, day by day, he soon found himself studying only an hour and a half upon it, then five, ten, fifteen, and even thirty minutes less. Encouraged, he redoubled his efforts, and within a few months the lesson could be learned in less than half an hour, a thing absolutely impossible with his habits of study when he entered the school. But he had done something more than to learn a Latin lesson in a shorter time. He had learned something of the value of

concentration. The acquisition of such power is of more value than the acquisition of knowledge.

Don't dally with your purpose.

"I go at what I am about," said Charles Kingsley, "as if there was nothing else in the world for the time being. That's the secret of all hard-working men; but most of them can't carry it into their amusements."

Many a man fails to become a great man by splitting into several small ones, choosing to be a tolerable Jack-of-all-trades rather than to be an unrivaled specialist. Such people produce admiration but not conviction.

"Many persons seeing me so much engaged in active life," said Edward Bulwer Lytton, "and as much about the world as if I had never been a student, have said to me, 'When do you get time to write all your books? How on earth do you contrive to do so much work?' I shall surprise you by the answer I made. The answer is this—'I contrive to do so much by never doing too much at a time. A man to get through work well must not overwork himself; or, if he do too much to-day, the reaction of fatigue will come, and he will be obliged to do too little to-morrow. Now, since I began really and ear-

nestly to study, which was not till I had left college, and was actually in the world, I may perhaps say that I have gone through as large a course of general reading as most men of my time. I have traveled much and I have seen much; I have mixed much in politics, and in the various business of life; and in addition to all this, I have published somewhere about sixty volumes, some upon subjects requiring much special research. And what time do you think, as a general rule, I have devoted to study, to reading and writing? Not more than three hours a day; and, when Parliament is sitting, not always that. But then, during these three hours, I have given my whole attention to what I was about."

S. T. Coleridge possessed marvelous powers of mind, but he had no definite purpose; he lived in an atmosphere of mental dissipation which consumed his energy, exhausted his stamina, and his life was in many respects a miserable failure. He lived in dreams and died in reverie. He was continually forming plans and resolutions, but to the day of his death they remained resolutions and plans. He was always just going to do something, but never did it. "Coleridge is dead," wrote Charles Lamb to a friend,

"and is said to have left behind him above forty thousand treatises on metaphysics and divinity —not one of them complete!"

One unwavering aim has ever characterized successful men.

"I resolved, when I began to read law," said Edward Sugden, afterwards Lord St. Leonard, "to make everything I acquired perfectly my own, and never go on to a second reading till I had entirely accomplished the first. Many of the competitors read as much in a day as I did in a week; but at the end of twelve months my knowledge was as fresh as on the day it was acquired, while theirs had glided away from their recollection."

It is the almost invisible point of a needle, the keen, slender edge of a razor or an axe, that opens the way for the huge bulk that follows. Without point or edge the bulk would be useless. It is the man of one line of work, the sharp-edged man, who cuts his way through obstacles, and achieves brilliant success. While we should shun that narrow devotion to one idea which prevents the harmonious development of our powers, we should avoid on the other hand the extreme versatility of one of whom W. M. Praed says:—

"His talk is like a stream which runs
With rapid change from rocks to roses,
It slips from politics to puns,
It glides from Mahomet to Moses;
Beginning with the laws that keep
The planets in their radiant courses,
And ending with some precept deep
For skinning eels or shoeing horses."

He who vacillates in his course, "yawing," as sailors say, first this way, then that, is pretty sure to be cast away before he has half finished the voyage of life. Weathercock men are nature's failures. No one can succeed who has not a fixed and resolute purpose in his mind, and an unwavering faith that he can accomplish his purpose. One little hair's-breadth above or below a direct aim, and a man has begun his downward course. "When I have once taken a resolution," said Cardinal Richelieu, "I go straight to my aim; I overthrow all, I cut down all."

The young man seeking a position to-day is not asked what college he came from or who his ancestors were, but "*What can you do?*" is the great question. It is special training that is wanted. Most of the men at the head of great firms and great enterprises have been promoted step by step from the bottom.

"Beware of making a purchase there," said an eminent Frenchman to one who wished to buy land and settle in a certain district; "I know the men of that department; the pupils who come from it to our veterinary school at Paris do not strike hard upon the anvil; they want energy, and you will not get a satisfactory return on any capital you may invest there."

What a great discrepancy there is between men and the results they achieve! It is due to the difference in their power of calling together all the rays of their ability, and concentrating them upon one point. Such a power will find a way, or make one. A versatile man is usually a smatterer.

Definiteness of aim is characteristic of all true art. He is not the greatest painter who crowds the greatest number of ideas upon a single canvas, giving all the figures equal prominence. He is the genuine artist who makes the greatest variety express the greatest unity, who develops the leading idea in the central figure, and makes all the subordinate figures, lights, and shades point to that centre and find expression there. So in every well-balanced life, no matter how versatile in endowments, or how broad in culture, there is one grand central

purpose, in which all the subordinate powers of the soul are brought to a focus, and where they will find fit expression. In nature we see no waste of energy, nothing left to chance. Since the shuttle of creation shot for the first time through chaos, design has marked the course of every golden thread. Every leaf, every flower, every crystal, every atom, even, has a purpose stamped upon it which unmistakably points to the crowning summit of all creation—man.

Young men are often told to aim high, but we must aim at what we would hit. He who cannot see an angel in the rough marble can never call it out with mallet and chisel. No, a general purpose is not enough. The arrow shot from the bow does not wander around to see what it can hit on its way, but flies straight to the mark. The magnetic needle does not point to all the lights in the heavens to see which it likes best. They all attract it. The sun dazzles, the meteor beckons, the stars twinkle to it, and try to win its affections; but the needle, true to its instinct, and with a finger that never errs in sunshine or in storm, points steadily to the North Star; for, while all the other stars must course with untiring tread around their great centres through all the ages, the North Star,

alone, distant beyond human comprehension, moves with stately sweep on its circuit of more than 25,000 years, for all practical purposes of man, stationary, not only for a day but for a century. So all along the path of life other luminaries will beckon to lead us from our cherished aim—from the course of truth and duty; but let no moons which shine with borrowed light, no meteors which dazzle but never guide, turn the needle of our purpose from the North Star of its hope.

CHAPTER VI

The Price of Success

The gods sell anything and to everybody at a fair price. —EMERSON.

To be thrown upon one's own resources is to be cast into the very lap of fortune.—FRANKLIN.

Heaven never helps the man who will not act.—SOPHOCLES.

There is no road to success but through a clear, strong purpose. A purpose underlies character, culture, position, attainment of whatever sort.—T. T. MUNGER.

"THERE is but one method of attaining excellence," said Sydney Smith, "and that is hard labor."

The mottoes of great men often give us glimpses of the secret of their characters and success. "Work! work! work!" was the motto of Sir Joshua Reynolds David Wilkie, and scores of other men who have left their mark upon the world. Voltaire's motto was "Toujours au travail" (always at work). Scott's maxim was "Never be doing nothing." Michael Angelo was a wonderful worker. He even slept in his clothes ready to spring to his work as soon as

he awoke. He kept a block of marble in his bedroom that he might get up in the night and work when he could not sleep. His favorite device was an old man in a go-cart, with an hour-glass upon it, bearing this inscription: "Ancora imparo" (still I'm learning). Even after he was blind he would ask to be wheeled into the Belvidere, to examine the statues with his hands. Cobden used to say, "I'm working like a horse without a moment to spare." It was said that Händel, the musician, did the work of a dozen men. Nothing ever daunted him. He feared neither ridicule nor defeat. Lord Palmerston worked like a slave, even in his old age. Being asked when he considered a man in his prime, he replied, "Seventy-nine," that being his own age. Humboldt was one of the world's great workers. In summer he arose at four in the morning for thirty years. He used to say work was as much of a necessity as eating or sleeping. Sir Walter Scott was a phenomenal worker. He wrote the "Waverley Novels" at the rate of twelve volumes a year. He averaged a volume every two months during his whole working life. What an example is this to the young men of to-day, of the possibilities of an earnest life! Edmund Burke was

one of the most prodigious workers that ever lived.

Daniel Webster said, "I have worked for more than twelve hours a day for fifty years." Charles James Fox became a great orator, yet few people outside of his personal friends had any idea of how he struggled to perfect himself in "the art of all arts." He never let an opportunity for speaking or self-culture pass unimproved. Henry Clay could have been found almost daily for years in some old Virginia barn, declaiming to the cattle for an audience. He said, "Never let a day go by without exercising your power of speech." Cæsar controlled men by exciting their fear; Cicero by captivating their affections and swaying their passions. The influence of one perished with its author; that of the other continues to this day. Beecher used to practice speaking for years in the woods and pastures.

"Work or starve," is nature's motto,—and it is written on the stars and the sod alike,—starve mentally, starve morally, starve physically. It is an inexorable law of nature that whatever is not used, dies. "Nothing for nothing," is her maxim. If we are idle and shiftless by choice, we shall be nerveless and powerless by necessity.

Do not choose your life-work solely for the money that you can make by it. It is a contemptible estimate of an occupation to regard it as a mere means of making a living. The Creator might have given us our bread ready-made. He might have kept us in luxurious Eden forever; but He had a grander and nobler end in view when He created man, than the mere satisfaction of his animal appetites and passions. There was a divinity within man, which the luxuries of Eden could never develop. There was an inestimable blessing in that curse which drove him from the garden, and compelled him forever to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow. It was not without significance that the Creator concealed our highest happiness and greatest good beneath the sternest difficulties, and made their attainment conditional upon a struggle for existence.

Depend upon it, there is always something wrong about the young man or woman who looks upon manual labor as degrading. Manual labor was never considered degrading until slavery came into existence.

Nature has left man in this unstable equilibrium, lest the satisfaction from the possession of that which he struggled so hard to get rob

him of his ambition for new conquests. The struggle to obtain is the great gymnasium of the race. Nature puts pleasure in the acquisition of that which the heart covets, but the moment we place our hand upon the prize, the charm vanishes; its usefulness is gone; it can develop no more character, no more stamina, no more manhood.

Labor is the great schoolmaster of the race. It is the grand drill in life's army, without which we are only confused and powerless when called into action. What a teacher industry is! It calls us away from conventional instructors, books, and theories, and brings us into the world's great school—into actual contact with men and things. The perpetual attrition of mind upon mind rasps off the rough edges of unpractical life and gives polish to character. It teaches patience, perseverance, forbearance, and application. It teaches method and system, by compelling us to crowd the most possible into every day and hour. Industry is a perpetual call upon the judgment, the power of quick decision; it makes ready men, practical men.

"To have any chance of success, I must be more steady than other men," Lord Campbell wrote to his father as an excuse for not visiting

home; "I must be in chambers when they are at the theatre; I must study when they are asleep; I must, above all, remain in town when they are in the country."

A blacksmith makes five dollars' worth of iron into horseshoes, and gets ten dollars for them. The cutler makes the same iron into knives, and gets two hundred dollars. The machinist makes the same iron into needles, and gets sixty-eight hundred dollars. The watch-maker takes it and makes it into mainsprings, and gets two hundred thousand dollars; or into hair-springs, and gets two million dollars, sixty times the value of the same weight of gold.

So it is with our life material which is given us at birth. Do something with it we must. We cannot throw it away, for even idleness leaves its curse upon it. One young man works his up into objects of beauty and utility. He mixes brains with it. Another botches and spoils his without purpose or aim until, perhaps late in life, he comes to his senses and tries to patch up the broken and wasted pieces; but it is a sorry apology to leave, in payment for a life of magnificent possibilities.

The world is full of just-a-going-to-bes,—subjunctive heroes who might, could, would, or

should be this or that but for certain obstacles or discouragements,—prospectuses which never become published works. They all long for success, but they want it at a discount. The "one price" for all is too high. They covet the golden round in the ladder, but they do not like to climb the difficult steps by which alone it can be reached. They long for victory, but shrink from the fight. They are forever looking for soft places and smooth surfaces where there will be the least resistance, forgetting that the very friction which retards the train upon the track, and counteracts a fourth of all the engine's power, is essential to its locomotion. Grease the track, and, though the engine puffs and the wheels revolve, the train will not move an inch.

Work is difficult in proportion as the end to be attained is high and noble. God has put the highest price upon the greatest worth. If a man would reach the highest success, he must pay the price himself. No titled pedigree, no money inherited from ancestors with long bank accounts, can be given in exchange for this commodity. He must be self-made or never made.

The Romans arranged the seats in their two

temples to Virtue and Honor, so that no one could enter the second without passing through the first. Such is the order of advance,—Virtue, Toil, Honor.

Do you long for an education? Would you, if necessary, wear threadbare clothes in college, and board yourself? Would you, like Thurlow Weed, study nights by the light of a camp-fire in a sugar-orchard? Would you walk through the snow two miles, with pieces of rag carpet tied about your feet for shoes, that you might, like him, borrow a coveted book? Have you the stamina to go on with your studies when too poor to buy bread, and when you can appease the pangs of hunger only by tying tighter and tighter about your body a girdle, as did Samuel Drew or Kitto? Can you eat sawdust without butter, as the great lawyer, Chitty, asked the young man who came to him for advice about studying law? Have you the determination that would hammer an education from the stone-quarry, with Hugh Miller; the patience that would spend a lifetime tracing the handwriting of the Creator down through the ages in the strata of the rocks? Would you work on a farm for twelve long years for a yoke of oxen and six sheep, with Henry Wilson? Do you

love learning well enough to walk forty miles to obtain a book you could not afford to buy, with Abraham Lincoln? Not that we would recommend such extreme measures; but if you saw no way open except such as was traveled by these and many other great men, would you be equal to the stern ordeal, and learn from experience that "the royal road to learning" is a myth, and that the real road is one that tears the brow with its thorns, and exhausts the heart with its disappointments?

Do you yearn to be an artist, and transfer to canvas or set free from marble the beauty which haunts your soul? Would you join Michael Angelo in carrying mortar for the frescoers up long ladders, to catch some suggestions from their words or work?

Would you excel in literature? Would not the dread of rejected manuscript, returned with thanks, dishearten you after you had given it years of your ripest thought and great sacrifice? Are you willing to live unrecognized and die unknown? You would have written Shakespeare's plays, but could you wait two hundred years for recognition, and die without even receiving mention from your greatest contemporary? Would you have laboriously created and

dictated "Paradise Lost" in a world you could not see, and then sell it for fifteen pounds, in an age in which a learned London critic could say: "The blind schoolmaster has written a tedious poem on 'The Fall of Man,' and unless length has merit, it has none"? Would not the grating of the jail door and the long nights in a dungeon dampen your ardor for the authorship of even the immortal "Pilgrim's Progress"? Would you endure the agonies of a De Quincey in order to write his matchless visions and analyses? Would you live on the borderland of want and woe and temptation for many years, with Poe, even for the sake of pioneering human thought into unexplored regions of weird and mystic speculation, of exquisite, ethereal beauty?

Would you be a soldier? Could you, like Napoleon, wait for an appointment seven years after you had prepared yourself thoroughly, and use all your enforced leisure in further intense study? Could you, while losing nine battles out of every ten, still press on with an iron determination which would win you Blücher's title of "Marshal Forward"? Could you, while losing more battles than you won, go on with Washington and conquer by the power of your character?

Would you bless your race by inventions or discoveries? Could you cheerfully earn the means to carry on your experiments by working in Richard Arkwright's barber-shop in a basement, with this sign over your door: "Come to the Subterraneous Barber—a Clean Shave for a Halfpenny"? Could you plod on with enthusiasm after seeing a mob tear down the mill you had erected for the employment of your machinery? Is incessant labor for fifteen weary years too great a price to pay for George Stephenson's first successful locomotive? Is thirty years too long to spend with Watt amid want and woe in perfecting the condensing engine? Is your determination strong enough to carry you to the verge of ruin, time and again, and to enable you when your credit is exhausted, and your wife has turned against you, to burn the palings of your fence and the furniture and floor of your house, and then add the shelves of your pantry to the fire which develops an enamel like Palissy's?

Could you wait eight years for a patent on telegraphy with Samuel F. B. Morse, and then almost fight for a chance to introduce it? Could you invent a hay-tedder, and then pay a farmer for trying it on his hay, because he said it would

"knock the seeds off"? Would you, after inventing McCormick's reaper, have the persistence to introduce it into England amid the ridicule of the press, the "London Times" calling it "a cross between an Astley chariot, a wheelbarrow, and a flying-machine"?

In politics, could you persevere to be a candidate sixteen times in vain, to be elected Governor Marcus Morton of Massachusetts in 1840 by a majority of but one vote?

Success is the child of drudgery and perseverance. Fame never comes because it is craved.

If you are built of such material as this, you will succeed; if not, in spite of all your dreams and wishes you will fail. Most people look upon poverty as bad fortune, and forget that it has ever been the priceless spur in nearly all great achievements, all down the ages.

"How unfortunate it is for a boy to have rich parents," said James Gordon Bennett to George W. Childs. "If you and I had been born that way, we would never have done anything worth mentioning."

"I began life with a sixpence," said Girard, "and believe that a man's best capital is his industry."

What an army of young men enters the suc-

cess-contest every year as raw recruits! Many of them are country youths flocking to the cities to buy success. Their young ambitions have been excited by some book, or fired by the story of some signal success, and they dream of becoming Astors or Girards, Stewarts or Wanamakers, Vanderbilts or Goulds, Lincolns or Garfields, until their innate energy impels them to try their own fortune in the magic metropolis. But what are you willing to pay for "success," as you call it, young man? Do you realize what that word means in a great city in the nineteenth century, where men grow gray at thirty and die of old age at forty,— where the race of life has become so intense that the runners are treading on the heels of those before them; and "woe to him who stops to tie his shoestring"? Do you know that only two or three out of every hundred will ever win permanent success, and only because they have kept everlastingly at it; and that the rest will sooner or later fail and many die in poverty because they have given up the struggle?

It is said of the young men who entered business on State Street, Boston, forty years ago, that even their names are almost forgotten.

Most of them were killed in the fierce struggle of competition.

Read the diary of an old man on Long Wharf, Boston, where the battle waged less fiercely: "Of all I knew in business, only five have succeeded in forty years. All the others failed or died in want." Of a thousand depositors in the Union Bank, all but six failed or died poor. "Bankruptcy," said one of the old bank directors, "is like death and almost as certain. They fall single and alone, and are thus forgotten, but there is no escape, and he is fortunate who fails young." In Pemberton Square among the lawyers, an old friend of Rufus Choate and Daniel Webster tells us there are two thousand attorneys in Boston, and only four hundred get a living by their profession, and only now and then one becomes distinguished.

But he who would succeed must pay the price. He must not look for a "soft job." Into work which he feels to be a part of his very existence he must pour his whole heart and soul. He must be fired by a determination which knows no defeat, which cares not for hunger or ridicule, which spurns hardships and laughs at want and disaster. They were not men of luck and broadcloth, nor of legacy and

laziness, but men inured to hardship and deprivation,—not afraid of threadbare clothes and honest poverty, men who fought their way to their own loaf,—who have pushed the world up from chaos into the light of the highest civilization. They were men who, as they climbed, expanded and lifted others to a higher plane and opened wider the doors of narrow lives.

If thou canst plan a noble deed,
And never flag till it succeed,
Though in the strife thy heart should bleed;
Whatever obstacles control,
Thine hour will come,—go on, true soul,
Thou 'lt win the prize,—thou 'lt reach the goal.

CHARLES MACKAY.

CHAPTER VII

Life is What We Make It

"Let 's find the sunny side of men,
Or be believers in it:
A light there is in every soul
That takes the pains to win it.
Oh! there 's a slumbering good in all,
And we perchance may wake it;
Our hands contain the magic wand;
This life is what we make it."

"THERE is dew in one flower and not in another," said Beecher, "because one opens its cup and takes it in, while the other closes itself and the drop runs off."

Are you dissatisfied with to-day's success? It is the harvest from yesterday's sowing. Do you dream of a golden morrow? You will reap what you are sowing to-day. We get out of life just what we put into it. The world has for us just what we have for it. It is a mirror which reflects the faces we make. If we smile and are glad, it reflects a cheerful, sunny face. If we are sour, irritable, mean, and contemptible, it still shows us a true copy of ourselves. The

world is a whispering-gallery which returns the echo of our own voices. What we say of others is said of us. We shall find nothing in the world which we do not first find in ourselves.

About the middle of the eighteenth century a lighthouse, called Dunston Pillar, was built on Lincoln Heath to guide travelers over a trackless, barren waste, a veritable desert, almost in the heart of England. But now it stands in the midst of a fertile region. No barren heath has been visible, even from its top, for more than a generation. Superphosphate of lime has effected this magic transformation. Many a barren, useless life has been made fruitful by the inspiration of a high ideal. Improvement hardly less radical is possible even in the best of lives. Apply the superphosphate of lofty purpose and your useless life will blossom like the rose.

Somehow we seem to have an innate conviction that, although we are free, yet there is a kind of fatality within us which hedges us about, limits our liberty, places bounds to our possibilities, and gives direction to our action. But freedom is also a part of fate, and what seems like inexorable destiny is but natural limitation. Knowledge, energy, push, annul fate. The broader we become, the more free-

dom we have. We are given all the liberty we can use. Fate recedes as knowledge advances. Only he who determines to rise superior to what is commonly meant by destiny will ever achieve great success.

"I resolved that, like the sun, so long as my day lasted, I would look on the bright side of everything," said Hood.

"There is always a black spot in our sunshine," says Carlyle; "it is the shadow of ourselves." Get out of your own light.

Our minds are given us but our characters we make. The lie never told for want of courage, the licentiousness never indulged in for fear of public rebuke, the irreverence of the heart, are just as effectual in staining the character as though the world knew all about them. A good character is a precious thing, above rubies, gold, crowns, or kingdoms, and the work of making it is the noblest on earth.

"I live in a constant endeavor to fence against the infirmities of ill health and other evils by mirth," said Sterne; "I am persuaded that every time a man smiles—but much more so when he laughs—it adds something to his fragment of life."

Take life like a man. Take it just as though

it was—as it is—an earnest, vital, essential affair. Take it just as though you personally were born to the task of performing a merry part in it--as though the world had waited for your coming. Take it as though it were a grand opportunity to do and to achieve, to carry forward great and good schemes.

"A gay, serene spirit is the source of all that is noble and good," said Schiller. "Whatever is accomplished of the greatest and the noblest sort flows from such a disposition. Petty, gloomy souls that only mourn the past and dread the future are not capable of seizing on the holiest moments of life."

Nature takes on our moods; she laughs with those who laugh and weeps with those who weep. If we rejoice and are glad the very birds sing more sweetly, the woods and streams murmur our song. But if we are sad and sorrowful a sudden gloom falls upon Nature's face; the sun shines, but not in our hearts, the birds sing, but not to us. The music of the spheres is pitched in a minor key.

If I trust, I am trusted; if I suspect, I am suspected; if I love, I am loved; if I hate, I am despised. Every man is a magnet and attracts to himself kindred spirits and principles until

he is surrounded by a world all his own, good or bad like himself; so all the bodily organs and functions are tied together in closest sympathy. If one laughs, all rejoice; if one suffers, all the others suffer with it.

The future will be just what we make it. Our purpose will give it its character. One's resolution is one's prophecy. There is no bright hope, no bright outlook for the man who has no great inspiration. A man is just what his resolution is. Tell us his purpose and there is the interpretation of him, of his manhood. There, too, is the revelation of his destiny. Leave all your discouraging pessimism behind. Do not prophesy evil, but good. Have the purpose within you to bring along better times, and better times will come. Men who hope large things are public benefactors. Men of hope to the front.

Whipple says that each man's levity, bigotry, ignorance, vice, or littleness erects a wall of adamant between himself and whatever is profound, comprehensive, wise, good, or great.

It has been well said that from the same materials one man builds palaces, another hovels; one warehouses, another villas; bricks and mortar are mortar and bricks until the architect

makes them something else. The block of granite which was an obstacle in the path of the weak becomes a stepping-stone in the pathway of the resolute. The difficulties which dishearten one man only stiffen the sinews of another, who looks on them as a sort of mental spring-board by which to vault across the gulf of failure on to the sure, solid ground of full success.

Our souls are harps strung to finer harmony, their compass varying according to the wholeness or halfness of our lives, the greater or less degree of our culture. The world is full of melody. Every atom, touched by unseen fingers, is vibrant with sweetest music, yet there is only now and then a soul sensitive enough to catch the finer strains. Rarely a poet or philosopher reads the "books in the running brooks, sermons in stones," or sees "God in everything." Only now and then an Agassiz, from a single track in the old red sandstone or a single fossil bone, can reconstruct a whole skeleton—reinvesting with flesh and reanimating with life an animal whose very species has been extinct for centuries. There is only now and then a Hugh Miller who can trace the footprints of the Creator down through the ages, and read the rec-

ords of the past imprinted in the rocks. But rarer, far rarer than these, are they who can catch responsively the higher music of sentient being, with its joys and hopes; of earnest, aspiring, struggling souls, tolerant, serious, yet sunny; of the glorious diapason of the fullness of the compassion and love of God.

Though all have eyes, all do not see, yet all eyes are constructed exactly alike. The same beautiful light impinges upon all retinas, but how different the images presented! While one man sees only gravel, fodder, and firewood upon Boston Common, another is ravished with its beauty. One sees in a matchless rose nothing but rose-water for sore eyes; another penetrates its purpose, and reads in the beauty of its blended colors and its wonderful fragrance the thoughts of God. The rose becomes a lens through which he gazes into the very heart of the Creator.

"Though our character is formed by circumstances," said John Stuart Mill, "our own desires can do much to shape those circumstances; and what is really inspiriting and ennobling in the doctrine of free will is the conviction that we have real power over the formation of our own character; our will, by influencing some of

our circumstances, being able to modify our future habits or capacities of willing."

As we may look without seeing and listen without hearing, so we may work without accomplishing anything. Michael Angelo was once commanded by his prince to mould a beautiful statue of snow—an illustrious example of the fact that it is not necessary to be idle in order to throw away time. That statue, though instinct with ideal beauty stamped upon it by an immortal hand, melted, and every trace of the sculptor's greatness was washed away. Oh, what precious hours we have all wasted, writing in oblivion's book! Wasted? worse than wasted, for the knowledge that we were working uselessly tended to beget a habit of aimless and careless work. Who has not worked for annihilation, painting in colors that fade, carving in stone that crumbles? Who has not built upon the sand, and written upon the water?

What we are to be really, we are now potentially. As the future oak lies folded in the acorn, so in the present lies our future. Our success will be, can be, but a natural tree, developed from the seeds of our own sowing: the fragrance of its blossoms and the richness of its

fruitage will depend upon the nourishment absorbed from our past and present.

Ruskin tells us that the earth we tread beneath our feet is composed of clay and sand and soot and water; and he tells us that, if nature has her perfect work (in these things), the clay will become porcelain, and may be painted upon and placed in the king's palace; then, again, it may become clear and hard and white, and have the power of drawing to itself the blue and the red, the green and the purple rays of the sunlight, and become an opal. The sand will become very hard and white, and have the power of drawing to itself the blue rays of the sunlight, and become a sapphire. The soot will become the hardest and whitest substance known, and be changed into a diamond. The water in the summer is a dewdrop, and in the winter crystallizes into a star. Even so the homeliest lives, by drawing to themselves the coloring of truth, sincerity, charity, and faith, may become crystals and gems "of purest ray serene."

"Our acts our angels are, or good or ill,
Our fatal shadows that walk by us still."
All are architects of fate,
Working in these walls of time;
Some with massive deeds and great,

Some with ornaments of rhyme;
For the structure that we raise,
Time is with materials filled;
Our to-days and yesterdays
Are the blocks with which we build.

LONGFELLOW.

CHAPTER VIII

The Victory in Defeat

They never fail who die in a great cause.—BYRON.

"Failures are but the pillars of success."

Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.—GOLDSMITH.

Adversity is the diamond-dust Heaven polishes its jewels with.—LEIGHTON.

Sometimes the truest lives of all
Are lived by those who fail.

MYRON HANFORD VEON.

NO MAN fails who does his best, for if the critical world ignore him, his labor is weighed in the scales of Omniscient Justice. As there is no effect without cause, no loss of energy in the world, so conscientious persistence cannot fail of its ultimate reward.

One of the first lessons of life is to learn how to get victory out of defeat. It takes courage and stamina, when mortified and embarrassed by humiliating disaster, to seek in the wreck or ruins the elements of future conquest. Yet this measures the difference between those who

succeed and those who fail. You cannot measure a man by his failures. You must know what use he makes of them. What did they mean to him? What did he get out of them?

I always watch with great interest a young man's first failure. It is the index of his life, the measure of his success-power. The mere fact of his failure does not interest me much; but how did he take his defeat? What did he do next? Was he discouraged? Did he slink out of sight? Did he conclude that he had made a mistake in his calling, and dabble in something else? Or did he up and at it again with a determination that knows no defeat?

There is something grand and inspiring in a young man who fails squarely after doing his level best, and then enters the contest again and again with undaunted courage and redoubled energy. I have no fears for the youth who is not disheartened at failure.

"It is defeat," says Henry Ward Beecher, "that turns bone to flint, and gristle to muscle, and makes men invincible, and formed those heroic natures that are now in ascendency in the world. Do not, then, be afraid of defeat. You are never so near to victory as when defeated in a good cause."

Failure becomes the final test of persistence and of an iron will. It either crushes a life, or solidifies it. The wounded oyster mends his shell with pearl.

"Failure is, in a sense," says Keats, "the highway to success, inasmuch as every discovery of what is false leads us to seek earnestly after what is true, and every fresh experience points out some form of error which we shall afterward carefully avoid."

No man is a failure who is upright and true. No cause is a failure which is in the right. There is but one failure, and that is not to be true to the best that is in us.

Of what avail would it be for a man without a kingdom, without an army, to oppose the most powerful monarch of Europe? William the Silent was a learned philosopher, an accomplished linguist, of good family and great wealth, and a lover of peace. Yet, as a mere citizen of little Holland, on what could he rely should he attempt to wage war against overwhelming odds, except the justice of his cause and the weight of his character?

Philip II. was a nephew of the emperor of Germany, husband of the queen of England, and ruler in his own right of Spain, Holland,

Belgium, and most of Italy, Oran, Tunis, the Cape Verde, Canary, and Philippine Islands, the Antilles, Mexico, and Peru. While his neighbors were weakened by quarrels, his resources were unrivaled. His cause was supported by the arms, wealth, glory, genius, and religion of Europe.

Philip determined to establish the Inquisition in the Netherlands, and William resolved to consecrate himself to the defense of the liberties of his country.

The struggle was prodigious. At last William died, but Philip was not a victor. Holland, indeed, was without a leader, but the vast Spanish monarchy was tottering to its fall. From the beginning of the contest, "the figure of the king becomes smaller and smaller until it finally disappears, while that of the Prince of Orange grows and grows, until it becomes the most glorious figure of the century." Proscribed, impoverished, calumniated, surrounded by assassins, often a fugitive, and finally a lifeless lump of clay, William had maintained throughout a solidity of character against which beat in vain the waves of corrupt wealth and injustice. Character is power.

Raleigh failed, but he left a name ever to be linked with brave effort and noble character.

Kossuth did not succeed, but his lofty career, his burning words, and his ideal fidelity will move men for good as long as time shall last. O'Connell did not win his cause, but he did achieve enduring fame as an orator, patriot, and apostle of liberty.

"No language," says E. P. Whipple, "can fitly express the meanness, the baseness, the brutality, with which the world has ever treated its victims of one age and boasts of them in the next. Dante is worshiped at that grave to which he was hurried by persecution. Milton in his own day was 'Mr. Milton, the blind adder, that spit his venom on the king's person;' and soon after, 'the mighty orb of song.' These absurd transitions from hatred to apotheosis, this recognition just at the moment when it becomes a mockery, sadden all intellectual history."

Those apparent defeats which would have silenced forever men of ordinary mould, only excited in these men a determination which, like the waters of the Hellespont, "ne'er felt retiring ebb." Who can estimate the world's debt to weak, deformed, and apparently defeated men, whose desperate struggles to redeem themselves from perpetual scorn have made them immortal? It was Byron's club-foot and shyness

which caused him to pour forth his soul in song. It was to Bedford jail that we owe the finest allegory in the world. Bunyan wrote nothing of note before or after his twelve years' imprisonment.

Death wins no victory over such men. Regulus might be destroyed bodily by cruel torture, but his spirit animated Rome to blot Carthage from the face of the earth. Winkelried did indeed fall beneath the Austrian spears, but Switzerland is free. Wallace was quartered: Scotland never. Lincoln became the victim of an assassin, but none the less his work went forward. Never was martyr yet whose death did not advance the cause he advocated tenfold more than could possibly have been accomplished by his voice or pen.

He who never failed has never half succeeded. The defeat at Bull Run was really the greatest victory of the Civil War, for it sent the cowards to the rear and the politicians home. It was the lightning-flash in the dark night of our nation's peril which gave us glimpses of the weak places in our army. It was the mirror which showed us the faces of the political aspirants.

"Heaven is probably a place for those who have failed on earth. The world will be blind

indeed if it does not reckon among its great ones such martyrs as miss the palms but not the pains of martyrdom, heroes without laurels and conquerors without the jubilations of triumph."

Uninterrupted successes at the beginning of a career are dangerous. Beware of the first great triumph. It may prove a failure. Many a man has been ruined by over-confidence born of his first victory. The mountain oak, tossed and swayed in the tempest until its proud top sweeps the earth, is all the stronger for its hundred battles with the elements if it only straighten up again. The danger is not in a fall, but in failing to rise.

All the great work of the world has been accomplished by courage, and the world's greatest victories have been born of defeat. Every blessing that we enjoy—personal security, individual liberty, and constitutional freedom—has been obtained through long apprenticeships of evil. The right of existing as a nation has only been accomplished through ages of wars and horrors. It required four centuries of martyrdom to establish Christianity, and a century of civil wars to introduce the Reformation.

To know how to wring victory from defeat,

and make stepping-stones of our stumbling-blocks, is the secret of success.

There is something sublime in the resolute, fixed purpose of suffering without complaining, which makes disappointment often better than success. Constant success shows us only one side of the world; for as it surrounds us with friends who tell us only of our merits, so it silences those enemies from whom only we can learn our defects.

Columbus was carried home in chains, on his third voyage, from the world he had discovered. Although the indignant people remonstrated, and his friend the queen had him set free, persecution followed him when he again crossed the Atlantic westward. At the age of seventy, after the "long wandering woe" of this fourth and final voyage, he was glad to reach Spain at last. He hoped for some reward—at least enough to keep soul and body together. But his appeals were fruitless. He lived for a few months after his return, poor, lonely, and stricken with a mortal disease. Even towards his death he was a scarcely tolerated beggar. He had to complain that his frock had been taken and sold, that he had not a roof of his own, and lacked wherewithal to pay his tavern bill. It was then

that, with failing breath, he uttered the words, sublime in their touching simplicity, "I, a native of Genoa, discovered in the distant West, the continent and isles of India." He expired at Valladolid, May 20, 1506, his last words being, "Lord, I deliver my soul into thy hands." Thus Columbus died a neglected beggar, while a pickle-dealer of Seville, whose highest position was that of second mate of a vessel, gave his name to the greatest continent on the globe. But was the Genoese mariner a failure? Ask more than a hundred millions of people who inhabit the world he found a wilderness. Ask the grandest republic the sun ever shone upon if Columbus was a failure.

When the troop-laden English ship Birkenhead was found to be foundering in stress of weather, the officer in charge of the battalion ordered his men to stand at "parade rest" while the boats rowed away with the women and children. They kept their places as the water swashed higher and higher around their feet, and, when it reached their waists, unstrapped their belts and held aloft their cartridge-boxes until with a wild lurch the wreck went down. Think you there was no victory in this apparent defeat? Character is power and triumphs over physical weakness.

"A man, true to man's grave religion," says Bulwer, "can no more despise a life wrecked in all else, while a hallowing affection stands out sublime through the rents and chinks of fortune, than he can profane with rude mockery a temple in ruins — if still left there the altar."

The exertion of all your strength of mind or body may result in nothing but failure in the eyes of a critical world, but what you have done is already weighed in the scales of Omniscient Justice, and can in no way avoid its legitimate reward.

CHAPTER IX

The Reward of Persistence

The falling drops at last will wear the stone.—LUCRETIUS.

Victory belongs to the most persevering.—NAPOLEON.

Success in most things depends on knowing how long it takes to succeed.—MONTESQUIEU.

The nerve that never relaxes, the eye that never blenches, the thought that never wanders,—these are the masters of victory.—BURKE.

In the lexicon of youth, which fate reserves for a bright manhood, there is no such word as fail.—BULWER.

"KNOW thy work and do it," said Carlyle; "and work at it like a Hercules. One monster there is in the world—an idle man."

"Whoever is resolved to excel in painting, or, indeed, in any other art," said Reynolds, "must bring all his mind to bear upon that one object from the moment that he rises till he goes to bed."

"Those who are resolved to excel must go to their work, willing or unwilling, morning, noon, and night," said Reynolds; "they will find it no play, but very hard labor."

"I have no secret but hard work," said Turner the painter.

"Young gentlemen," said Francis Wayland, "remember that nothing can stand days' work."

"My sons," said a dying farmer to his three indolent boys, "a great treasure lies hid in the estate which I am about to leave to you." "Where is it hid?" asked the eager sons in chorus. "I am about to tell you," gasped the sick man; "you will have to dig for it"—but here his spirit departed. The sons turned over every sod upon the estate, without finding any buried gold; but they learned to work, and when the fields were sown, an enormous harvest repaid their thorough digging.

"The man who is perpetually hesitating which of two things he will do first," said William Wirt, "will do neither. The man who resolves, but suffers his resolution to be changed by the first counter-suggestion of a friend—who fluctuates from opinion to opinion, from plan to plan, and veers like a weather-cock to every point of the compass, with every breath of caprice that blows, can never accomplish anything great or useful. Instead of being progressive in anything, he will be at best stationary, and, more probably, retrograde in all.

"Who first consults wisely, then resolves firmly, and then executes his purpose with in-

flexible perseverance, undismayed by those petty difficulties which daunt a weaker spirit—that man can advance to eminence in any line."

We are told that perseverance built the pyramids on Egypt's plains, erected the gorgeous temple at Jerusalem, inclosed in adamant the Chinese Empire, scaled the stormy, cloud-capped Alps, opened a highway through the watery wilderness of the Atlantic, leveled the forests of the new world, and reared in its stead a community of states and nations. Perseverance has wrought from the marble block the exquisite creations of genius, painted on canvas the gorgeous mimicry of nature, and engraved on a metallic surface the viewless substance of the shadow. Perseverance has put in motion millions of spindles, winged as many flying shuttles, harnessed thousands of iron steeds to as many freighted cars, and set them flying from town to town and nation to nation, tunneled mountains of granite, and annihilated space with the lightning's speed. Perseverance has whitened the waters of the world with the sails of a hundred nations, navigated every sea and explored every land. Perseverance has reduced nature in her thousand forms to as many sciences, taught her laws, prophesied her future

movements, measured her untrodden spaces, counted her myriad hosts of worlds, and computed their distances, dimensions, and velocities.

Lofty mountains are wearing down by slow degrees. The ocean is gradually but slowly filling up, by deposits from its thousand rivers. The Niagara Falls have worn back seven miles through the hard lime stone, over which they pour their thundering columns of water, and will by and by drain the great lake which feeds the boiling chasm. The Red Sea and whole regions of the Pacific Ocean are gradually filling up by the labors of a little insect, so small as to be almost invisible to the naked eye.

The slow penny is surer than the quick dollar. The slow trotter will out-travel the fleet racer. Genius darts, flutters, and tires; but perseverance wears and wins. The all-day horse wins the race. The afternoon-man wears off the laurels. The last blow drives home the nail.

"Are your discoveries often brilliant intuitions?" asked a reporter of Thomas A. Edison. "Do they come to you while you are lying awake nights?"

"I never did anything worth doing by accident," was the reply, "nor did any of my inventions come indirectly through accident, ex-

cept the phonograph. No, when I have fully decided that a result is worth getting I go ahead on it and make trial after trial until it comes. I have always kept strictly within the lines of commercially useful inventions. I have never had any time to put on electrical wonders, valuable simply as novelties to catch the popular fancy. *I like it,*" continued the great inventor. "I don't know any other reason. You know some people like to collect stamps. Anything I have begun is always on my mind, and I am not easy while away from it until it is finished."

A man who thus gives himself wholly to his work is certain to accomplish something; and if he have ability and common sense, his success will be great.

Gibbon worked twenty years on his "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire." Noah Webster spent thirty-six years on his dictionary. What a sublime patience he showed in devoting a life to the collection and definition of words. George Bancroft spent twenty-six years on his "History of the United States." Newton rewrote his "Chronology of Ancient Nations" fifteen times. Titian wrote to Charles V.: "I send your majesty the Last Supper, after working on it almost daily for seven years." He worked on his Pietro

Martyn eight years. George Stephenson was fifteen years perfecting his locomotive; Watt, twenty years on his condensing-engine. Harvey labored eight long years before he published his discovery of the circulation of the blood. He was then called a crack-brained impostor by his fellow physicians. Amid abuse and ridicule he waited twenty-five years before his great discovery was recognized by the profession.

Newton discovered the law of gravitation before he was twenty-one, but one slight error in a measurement of the earth's circumference interfered with a demonstration of the correctness of his theory. Twenty years later he corrected the error, and showed that the planets roll in their orbits as a result of the same law which brings an apple to the ground.

An Italian music-teacher once told a pupil who wished to know what could be hoped for with study: "If you will study a year I will teach you to sing well; if two years, you may excel. If you will practice the scale constantly for three years, I will make you the best tenor in Italy; if for four years, you may have the world at your feet."

"The only merit to which I lay claim," said Hugh Miller, "is that of patient research--a

merit in which whoever wills may rival or surpass me; and this humble faculty of patience when rightly developed may lead to more extraordinary development of ideas than even genius itself."

"Never depend upon your genius," said John Ruskin, in the words of Joshua Reynolds; "if you have talent, industry will improve it; if you have none, industry will supply the deficiency."

Patience is the guardian of faith, the preserver of peace, the cherisher of love, the teacher of humility. Patience governs the flesh, strengthens the spirit, sweetens the temper, stifles anger, extinguishes envy, subdues pride; she bridles the tongue, restrains the hand, tramples upon temptations, endures persecutions. Patience is the courage of virtue, enabling us to lessen pain of mind or body; it does not so much add to the number of our joys as it tends to diminish the number of our sufferings. Labor is still, and ever will be, the inevitable price set upon everything which is valuable.

Savages believe that, when they conquer an enemy, his spirit enters into them, and fights for them ever afterwards. So the spirit of our conquests enters us, and helps us to win the next victory.

Opposing circumstances create strength. Opposition gives us greater power of resistance. To overcome one barrier gives us greater ability to overcome the next.

Who will not befriend the persevering, energetic youth, the fearless man of industry?

Be sure that your trade, your profession, your calling in life is a good one—one that God and goodness sanction; then be true as steel to it. Think for it, plan for it, work for it, live for it; throw your mind, might, strength, heart, and soul into your actions for it, and success will crown you her favored child. No matter whether your object be great or small, whether it be the planting of a nation or a batch of potatoes, the same perseverance is necessary. Everybody admires an iron determination, and comes to the aid of him who directs it for good.

Don't damp fires and cool off boilers while but two thirds across the Atlantic; keep up the heat.

C. C. Coffin says that in February, 1492, a poor, grayhaired man, his head bowed with discouragement almost to the back of his mule, rode slowly out through the beautiful gateway of the Alhambra. From boyhood he had been haunted with the idea that the earth is round.

He believed that the piece of carved wood picked up four hundred miles at sea, and the bodies of two men unlike any other human beings known, found on the shores of Portugal, had drifted from unknown lands in the west. But his last hope of obtaining aid for a voyage of discovery had failed. King John of Portugal, while pretending to think of helping him, had sent out secretly an expedition of his own.

He had begged bread, drawn maps and charts to keep him from starving; he had lost his wife; his friends had called him crazy, and forsaken him. The council of wise men, called by Ferdinand and Isabella, ridiculed his theory of reaching the east by sailing west.

"But the sun and moon are round," said Columbus, "why not the earth?"

"If the earth is a ball, what holds it up?" asked the wise men.

"What holds the sun and moon up?" inquired Columbus.

"But how can men walk with their heads hanging down, and their feet up, like flies on a ceiling?" asked a learned doctor; "how can trees grow with their roots in the air?"

"The water would run out of the ponds and we should fall off," said another philosopher.

"This doctrine is contrary to the Bible, which says, 'The heavens are stretched out like a tent:'—of course it is flat; it is rank heresy to say it is round," said a priest.

He left the Alhambra in despair, intending to offer his services to Charles VII., but he heard a voice calling his name. An old friend had told Isabella that it would add great renown to her reign at a trifling expense if what the sailor believed should prove true. "It shall be done," said Isabella, "I will pledge my jewels to raise the money. Call him back."

Columbus turned and with him turned the world. Not a sailor would go voluntarily; so the king and queen compelled them. Three days out in his vessels scarcely larger than fishing-schooners, the Pinta floated a signal of distress for a broken rudder. Terror seized the sailors, but Columbus calmed their fears with pictures of gold and precious stones from India. Two hundred miles west of the Canaries, the compass ceased to point to the North Star. The sailors are ready to mutiny, but he tells them the North Star is not exactly north. Twenty-three hundred miles from home, though he tells them it is but seventeen hundred, a bush with berries floats by, land birds fly near, and they

pick up a piece of wood curiously carved. On October 12, Columbus raised the banner of Castile over the western world.

What is difficulty for but to teach us the necessity of redoubled exertion? danger but to give us fresh courage? impossibilities but to inspire us to the enforcement of victory? Longfellow has well illustrated this tenacity of purpose:—

"The divine insanity of noble minds,
That never falters nor abates,
But labors, and endures, and waits
Till all that it foresees it finds,
Or what it cannot find, creates."

"How hard I worked at that tremendous shorthand, and all improvement appertaining to it," said Dickens. "I will only add to what I have already written of my perseverance at this time of my life, and of a patient and continuous energy which then began to be matured within me, and which I know to be the strong point of my character, if it have any strength at all, that there, on looking back, I find the source of my success."

Successful men, it is said, owe more to their perseverance than to their natural powers, their friends, or the favorable circumstances around

them. Genius will falter by the side of labor, great powers will yield to great industry. Talent is desirable, but perseverance is more so.

"Generally speaking," said Sydney Smith, "the life of all truly great men has been a life of intense and incessant labor. They have commonly passed the first half of life in the gross darkness of indigent humility, — overlooked, mistaken, condemned by weaker men,—thinking while others slept, reading while others rioted, feeling something within them that told them they should not always be kept down among the dregs of the world. And then, when their time has come, and some little accident has given them their first occasion, they have burst out into the light and glory of public life, rich with the spoils of time, and mighty in all the labors and struggles of the mind."

"If I am building a mountain," said Confucius, "and stop before the last basketful of earth is placed on the summit, I have failed."

Benjamin Franklin had this tenacity of purpose in a wonderful degree. When he started in the printing business in Philadelphia, he carried his material through the streets on a wheelbarrow. He hired one room for his office, work-room, and sleeping-room. He found a for-

midable rival in the city and invited him to his room. Pointing to a piece of bread from which he had just eaten his dinner, he said: "Unless you can live cheaper than I can you cannot starve me out."

All are familiar with the misfortune of Carlyle while writing his "History of the French Revolution." After the first volume was ready for the press, he loaned the manuscript to a neighbor who left it lying on the floor, and the servant girl took it to kindle the fire. It was a bitter disappointment, but Carlyle was not the man to give up. After many months of poring over hundreds of volumes of authorities and scores of manuscripts, he reproduced that which had burned in a few minutes.

A merchant went to a sculptor and wanted to hire him by the day to carve a statue. "Wretch," was the reply, "I have been twenty-five years learning how to make that statue in twenty-five days."

Addison amassed three volumes of manuscript before he began the "Spectator."

Every one admires a determined, persistent man. Marcus Morton ran sixteen times for governor of Massachusetts. At last his opponents voted for him from admiration of his

pluck, and he was elected by one majority. Lord Eldon copied the whole of Coke upon Littleton twice over because too poor to buy books. Gibbon wrote his memoirs over nine times. Such persistence always triumphs.

Great writers have ever been noted for their tenacity of purpose. Their works have not been flung off from minds aglow with genius, but have been elaborated and elaborated into grace and beauty, until every trace of their efforts has been obliterated. Bishop Butler worked twenty years incessantly on his "Analogy," and even then was so dissatisfied that he wanted to burn it. Rousseau says he obtained the ease and grace of his style only by ceaseless inquietude, by endless blotches and erasures. Vergil worked eleven years on the Æneid. The note-books of great men like Hawthorne and Emerson are tell-tales of the enormous drudgery of the years put into a book which may be read in an hour. Montesquieu was twenty-five years writing his "Esprit des Lois," yet you can read it in sixty minutes. Adam Smith spent ten years on his "Wealth of Nations." A rival playwright once laughed at Euripides for spending three days on three lines, when he had written five hundred lines. "But your five hundred lines in

three days will be dead and forgotten, while my three lines will live forever," he replied.

The rolling stone gathers no moss. The persistent tortoise outruns the swift but fickle hare. An hour a day for twelve years more than equals the time given to study in a four years' course at a high school. The reading and re-reading of a single volume has been the making of many a man. "Patience," says Bulwer, "is the courage of the conqueror; it is the virtue *par excellence*, of Man against Destiny—of the One against the World, and of the Soul against Matter. Therefore, this is the courage of the Gospel; and its importance in a social view—its importance to races and institutions—cannot be too earnestly inculcated."

Want of constancy is the cause of many a failure, making the millionaire of to-day a beggar to-morrow. Show me a really great triumph that is not the reward of persistence. One of the paintings which made Titian famous was on his easel eight years; another, seven. How came popular writers famous? By writing for years without any pay at all; by writing hundreds of pages as mere practice-work; by working like galley-slaves at literature for half a lifetime with no other compensation than—fame.

"Never despair," says Burke; "but if you do, work on in despair." "He who has put forth his total strength in fit actions," says Emerson, "has the richest return of wisdom."

"There is also another class," says a moralist, "chiefly among the fair sex, who are incapable of making up their minds, even with the help of others; who change and change and repent again, and return to their first resolution, and then regret that they have done so when too late. They hesitate between a walk and a drive, between going in one direction or another, and fifty other things equally immaterial; and always end the matter by doing what they fancy, at any rate, is the least agreeable and eligible of the two. Of course this disposition, shown in these trifles, will be shown in more important matters; and a most distressing and unfortunate disposition it is, both for themselves and those around them. Now, the only remedy for such a turn of mind is resolutely to keep to the first decision, whatever it may be, without dwelling on its advantages or disadvantages, and allowing any useless regrets after the thing is done; and even if a mistake is often made at the outset, from want of the habit of ready and unwavering judgment, it will be far less

mischievous than weak and wretched indecision."

Success is not measured by what a man accomplishes, but by the opposition he has encountered, and the courage with which he has maintained the struggle against overwhelming odds, as Alexander learned by defeat the art of war.

The head of the god Hercules is represented as covered with a lion's skin with claws joined under the chin, to show that when we have conquered our misfortunes, they become our helpers. Oh, the glory of an unconquerable will!

The heights by great men reached and kept
  Were not attained by sudden flight,
But they, while their companions slept,
  Were toiling upward in the night.

We have not wings, we cannot soar;
  But we have feet to scale and climb,
By slow degrees, by more and more,
  The cloudy summit of our time.

LONGFELLOW.

CHAPTER X

Possibilities in Spare Moments

Dost thou love life? Then do not squander time, for that is the stuff life is made of.—FRANKLIN.

Eternity itself cannot restore the loss struck from the minute.—ANCIENT POET.

A man that is young in years may be old in hours, if he have lost no time.—BACON.

Believe me when I tell you that thrift of time will repay you in after life, with a usury of profit beyond your most sanguine dreams, and that waste of it will make you dwindle alike in intellectual and moral stature, beyond your darkest reckoning.—GLADSTONE.

There is not an hour of youth but is trembling with destinies—not a moment of which, once past, the appointed work can ever be done again, or the neglected blow struck on the cold iron.—RUSKIN.

"WHAT is the price of that book?" at length asked a man who had been dawdling for an hour in the front store of Benjamin Franklin's newspaper establishment. "One dollar," replied the clerk. "One dollar," echoed the lounger; "can't you take less than that?" "One dollar is the price," was the answer.

The would-be purchaser looked over the books on sale awhile longer, and then inquired: "Is Mr. Franklin in?" "Yes," said the clerk, "he is very busy in the press-room." "Well, I want to see him," persisted the man. The proprietor was called, and the stranger asked: "What is the lowest, Mr. Franklin, that you can take for that book?" "One dollar and a quarter," was the prompt rejoinder. "One dollar and a quarter! Why, your clerk asked me only a dollar just now." "True," said Franklin, "and I could have better afforded to take a dollar than to leave my work."

The man seemed surprised; but, wishing to end a parley of his own seeking, he demanded: "Well, come now, tell me your lowest price for this book." "One dollar and a half," replied Franklin. "A dollar and a half! Why, you offered it yourself for a dollar and a quarter." "Yes," said Franklin coolly, "and I could better have taken that price then than a dollar and a half now."

The man silently laid the money on the counter, took his book, and left the store, having received a salutary lesson from a master in the art of transmuting time, at will, into either wealth or wisdom.

Time-wasters are everywhere.

On the floor of the gold-working room in the United States Mint at Philadelphia, there is a wooden lattice-work which is taken up when the floor is swept, and the fine particles of gold-dust, thousands of dollars yearly, are thus saved. So every successful man has a kind of network to catch "the raspings and parings of existence, those leavings of days and wee bits of hours" which most people sweep into the waste of life. He who hoards and turns to account all odd minutes, half hours, unexpected holidays, gaps "between times," and chasms of waiting for unpunctual persons, achieves results which astonish those who have not mastered this secret.

The days come to us like friends in disguise, bringing priceless gifts from an unseen hand; but, if we do not use them, they are borne silently away, never to return. Each successive morning new gifts are brought, but if we failed to accept those that were brought yesterday and the day before, we become less and less able to turn them to account, until the ability to appreciate and utilize them is exhausted. Wisely was it said that lost wealth may be regained by industry and economy, lost knowl-

edge by study, lost health by temperance and medicine, but lost time is gone forever.

"Oh, it's only five minutes or ten minutes till mealtime; there's no time to do anything now," is one of the commonest expressions heard in the family. But what monuments have been built up by poor boys with no chance, out of broken fragments of time which many of us throw away. The very hours you have wasted, if improved, might have insured your success.

"While the students at Andover were waiting for breakfast at the boarding-house," said a lady, "the rest of the young men would stand chaffing each other; but Joseph Cook, if there were only a half minute to spare, would turn to the big dictionary in the corner of the room, and learn the synonyms of a word, or search out its derivation." It is a cheap thing to say that Joseph Cook has evidently swallowed the dictionary, and cheap people often make the remark; but our age has not produced many nobler geniuses nor a more magnificent specimen of true self-culture.

Marion Harland has accomplished wonders, and she has been able to do this by economizing the minutes to shape her novels and newspaper articles, when her children were in bed and

whenever she could get a spare minute. Though she has done so much, yet all her life has been subject to interruptions which would have discouraged most women from attempting anything outside their regular family duties. She has glorified the commonplace as few other women have done. Harriet Beecher Stowe, too, wrote her great masterpiece, "Uncle Tom's Cabin," in the midst of pressing household cares. Beecher read Froude's "England," a little each day that he had to wait for dinner. Longfellow translated the "Inferno" by snatches of ten minutes a day, while waiting for his coffee to boil, persisting for years until the work was done.

If a genius like Gladstone carries through life a little book in his pocket lest an unexpected spare moment slip from his grasp, what should we of common abilities not resort to, to save the precious moments from oblivion? What a rebuke is such a life to the thousands of young men and women who throw away whole months and even years of that which the "Grand Old Man" hoards up even to the smallest fragments. Many a great man has snatched his reputation from odd bits of time which others, who wonder at their failure to get on, throw away. In

Dante's time nearly every literary man in Italy was a hard-working merchant, physician, statesman, judge, or soldier.

Oh, what wonders have been performed in "one hour a day!"

One hour a day withdrawn from frivolous pursuits, and profitably employed, would enable any man of ordinary capacity to master a complete science. One hour a day would make an ignorant man a well-informed man in ten years. One hour a day would earn enough to pay for two daily and two weekly papers, two leading magazines, and a dozen good books. In an hour a day a boy or girl could read twenty pages thoughtfully — over seven thousand pages, or eighteen large volumes in a year. An hour a day might make all the difference between bare existence and useful, happy living. An hour a day might make—nay, has made—an unknown man a famous one, a useless man a benefactor to his race. Consider, then, the mighty possibilities of two—four—yes, six hours a day that are, on the average, thrown away by young men and women in the restless desire for fun and diversion!

Every young man should have a hobby to occupy his leisure hours, something useful to

which he can turn with delight, whenever he has a little leisure time. It might be in line with his work or otherwise, only his *heart must be in it.* A stone-cutter had butterflies for a hobby; and, when he died, he had one of the best collections in the world.

Some boys will pick up a good education in the odds and ends of time which others carelessly throw away, as one man saves a fortune by small economies which others disdain to practice. What young man is too busy to get an hour a day for self-improvement? Charles C. Frost, the celebrated shoemaker of Vermont, resolved to devote one hour a day to study. He became one of the most noted mathematicians in the United States. He also gained an enviable reputation in other departments of knowledge. John Hunter, like Napoleon, allowed himself but four hours of sleep, and it took Professor Owen ten years to arrange and classify the specimens in Comparative Anatomy, over twenty-four thousand in number, which Hunter's industry had collected. What a record for a boy who began his studies while working as a carpenter!

"When one begins to turn in bed," says Wellington, "it is time to turn out."

Many of the greatest men of history earned

their fame outside of their regular occupations in odd bits of time which most people squander. Spenser made his reputation in his spare time, while Secretary of the Lord Deputy of Ireland. Sir John Lubbock's fame rests on his pre-historic studies, prosecuted outside of his busy banking-hours. Southey, seldom idle for a minute, wrote a hundred volumes. Hawthorne's note-book shows that he never let a chance thought or circumstance escape him. Franklin was a tireless worker. He crowded his meals and sleep into as small compass as possible, that he might gain time for study. When a child, he became impatient of his father's long grace at table, and asked him if he could not say grace over a whole cask once for all, and save time. He wrote some of his best productions on shipboard, such as his "Improvement of Navigation" and "Smoky Chimneys."

What a lesson there is in Raphael's brief thirty-seven years to those who plead "no time" as an excuse for wasted lives!

Great men have ever been misers of moments. Cicero said: "What others give to public shows and entertainments, nay, even to mental and bodily rest, I give to the study of philosophy." A great Chancellor of France wrote a valuable

work in odd moments while waiting for his meals. Lord Bacon's fame springs from the work of his leisure hours while Chancellor of England. During an interview with a great monarch, Goethe suddenly excused himself, went into an adjoining room and wrote down a thought for his "Faust," lest it should be forgotten. Sir Humphry Davy achieved eminence in spare moments in an attic of an apothecary's shop. Pope would often rise in the night to write out thoughts that would not come during the busy day. Grote wrote his matchless "History of Greece" during the hours of leisure snatched from his duties as a banker.

Samuel Budgett seemed born to work. "Doing, doing, ever doing," says his biographer, "he seemed to abhor idleness more than Nature abhors a vacuum. An idle hour would have been a sort of purgatory." In his notes he speaks of a "joyless and an uncomfortable Sabbath; and no wonder," he adds, "for I did not rise till half past five o'clock."

Jeremy Bentham thought it a calamity to lose the least bit of time, and so arranged his work that not a moment would be wasted.

The present time is the raw material out of which we make whatever we will. Do not brood

over the past, or dream of the future, but seize the instant and *get your lesson from the hour.* The man is yet unborn who rightly measures and fully realizes the value of an hour. As Fénelon says, God never gives but one moment at a time, and does not give a second until he withdraws the first.

Lord Brougham could not bear to lose a moment, yet he was so systematic that he always seemed to have more leisure than many who did not accomplish a tithe of what he did. He achieved distinction in politics, law, science, and literature.

Dr. Johnson wrote "Rasselas" in the evenings of a single week, to meet the expenses of his mother's funeral.

The wise Cato said that he regretted only three things in his life: telling his wife a secret, going once by sea when he could have gone by land, and passing one day without doing anything.

The worst of a lost hour is not so much in the wasted time as in the wasted power. Idleness rusts the nerves and makes the muscles creak. Work has system, laziness has none. President Quincy never went to bed until he had laid his plans for the next day.

In factories for making cloth a single broken thread ruins a whole web; it is traced back to the girl who made the blunder and the loss is deducted from her wages. But who shall pay for the broken threads in life's great web? We cannot throw back and forth an empty shuttle; threads of some kind follow every movement as we weave the web of our fate. It may be a shoddy thread of wasted hours or lost opportunities that will mar the fabric and mortify the workman forever; or it may be a golden thread which will add to its beauty and lustre. We cannot stop the shuttle or pull out the unfortunate thread which stretches across the fabric, a perpetual witness of our folly.

Don't defer your good deeds until you have time to do them. Very little good was ever done during hours of leisure. It is the men and women who are crowded with work who build hospitals, churches, and orphan asylums, and do the great charities of the world.

No one is anxious about a young man while he is busy in useful work. But where does he eat his lunch at noon? Where does he go when he leaves his boarding-house at night? What does he do after supper? Where does he spend

his Sundays and holidays? The way he uses his spare moments reveals his character. The great majority of youth who go to the bad are ruined after supper. Most of those who climb upward to honor and fame devote their evenings to study or work or the society of the wise and good. For the right use of these leisure hours, what we have called the waste of life, the odd moments usually thrown away, the author would plead with every youth. Each evening is a crisis in the career of a young man. There is a deep significance in the lines of Whittier:—

"This day we fashion Destiny, our web of Fate we spin;
This day for all hereafter choose we holiness or sin."

Time is money. We should not be stingy or mean with it, but we should not throw away an hour any more than we would throw away a dollar-bill. Waste of time means waste of energy, waste of vitality, waste of character in dissipation. It means bad companions, bad habits. It means the waste of opportunities which will never come back. Beware how you kill time, for all your future lives in it.

"And it is left for each," says Edward Everett, "by the cultivation of every talent, by watching with an eagle's eye for every chance

of improvement, by redeeming time, defying temptation, and scorning sensual pleasure, to make himself useful, honored, and happy."

CHAPTER XI

Self-Respect and Self-Confidence

The reverence of man's self is, next to religion, the chiefest bridle of all vices.—BACON.

Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control, these three alone lead life to sovereign power.—TENNYSON.

Self-respect, — that corner-stone of all virtue. — JOHN HERSCHEL.

Self-distrust is the cause of most of our failures. In the assurance of strength there is strength, and they are the weakest, however strong, who have no faith in themselves or their powers.—BOVEE.

THE world has a right to look to me for my own rating. We stamp our own value upon ourselves and cannot expect to pass for more. When you are introduced into society, people look into your face and eye to see what estimate you place upon yourself. If they see a low mark, why should they trouble themselves to investigate to see if you have not rated yourself too low? They know you have lived with yourself a good while and ought to know your own value better than they.

What seems to us disagreeable egotism in

others is often but a strong expression of confidence in their ability to attain. Great men have usually had great confidence in themselves. Wordsworth felt sure of his place in history, and never hesitated to say so. Dante predicted his own fame. Kepler said it did not matter whether his contemporaries read his books or not. "I may well wait a century for a reader since God has waited 6000 years for an observer like myself." "Fear not," said Julius Cæsar to his pilot frightened in a storm; "thou bearest Cæsar and his good fortunes."

Egotism, so common in men of rank, may be a necessity. Nature gives man large hope lest he falter before reaching the high mark she sets for him. So she has overloaded his egotism, often beyond the pleasing point, to make sure that he will persist in pushing his way upward. Self-confidence indicates reserve power. It may show that one feels equal to the occasion.

Morally considered, it is usually safe to trust those who can trust themselves, but when a man suspects his own integrity, it is time he was suspected by others. Moral degradation always begins at home.

In this busy world, men have no time to hunt about in obscure corners for retiring merit.

They prefer to take a man at his own estimate until he proves himself unworthy. The world admires courage and manliness, and despises a young man who goes about "with an air of perpetual apology for the unpardonable sin of being in the world."

A youth should have that self-respect which lifts him above meanness, and makes him independent of slights and snubs.

"It is only shallow-minded pretenders," said Webster, "who make either distinguished origin a matter of personal merit, or obscure origin a matter of personal reproach. A man who is not ashamed of himself need not be ashamed of his early condition. It did happen to me to be born in a log-cabin, raised amid the snow-drifts of New Hampshire, at a period so early that, when the smoke first rose from its rude chimney and curled over the frozen hills, there was no similar evidence of white man's habitation between it and the settlements on the rivers of Canada.

"Its remains still exist; I make it an annual visit. I carry my children to it, and teach them the hardships endured by the generations before them. I love to dwell on the tender recollections, the kindred ties, the early affections, and the narrations and incidents which mingle with all

I know of this primitive family abode. I weep to think that none who then inhabited it are now among the living; and if ever I fail in affectionate veneration for him who raised it, and defended it against savage violence and destruction, cherished all domestic comforts beneath its roof, and through the fire and blood of seven years' revolutionary war shrunk from no toil, no sacrifice to serve his country, and to raise his children to a condition better than his own, may my name and the name of my posterity be blotted from the memory of mankind."

"I have studied all my law books," said Curran, pleading, "and cannot find a single case where the principle contended for by the opposing counsel is established."

"I suspect, sir," interrupted Judge Robinson, who owed his position to his authorship of several poorly written, but sycophantic and scurrilous pamphlets, "I suspect that your law library is rather contracted."

"It is true, my lord, that I am poor," said the young lawyer calmly, looking the judge steadily in the face; "and the circumstance has rather curtailed my library. My books are not numerous, but they are select, and I hope have been perused with proper dispositions. I

have prepared myself for this high profession rather by the study of a few good books, than by the composition of a great many bad ones. I am not ashamed of my poverty, but I should be of my wealth, could I stoop to acquire it by servility and corruption. If I rise not to rank, I shall at least be honest. And should I ever cease to be so, many an example shows me that an ill-acquired elevation, by making me the more conspicuous, would only make me the more universally and the more notoriously contemptible." Judge Robinson never again sneered at the young barrister.

"Self-reliance is a grand element of character," says Michael Reynolds. "It has won Olympic crowns and Isthmian laurels; it confers kinship with men who have vindicated their divine right to be held in the world's memory."

Self-confidence and self-respect give a sense of power which nothing else can bestow.

The weak, the leaning, the dependent, the vacillating, the undecided,—

"Know not, nor ever can, the generous pride
That glows in him who on himself relies.

. . . . .

His joy is not that he has got the crown
But that the power to win the crown is his."

This above all,—to thine own self be true;
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.

SHAKESPEARE.

CHAPTER XII

Tact or Common Sense

"A loaf baked is better than a harvest contemplated. An acre in Cook County is better than a whole principality in Utopia."

LOUIS PHILIPPE said he was the only sovereign in Europe fit to govern, for he could black his own boots. The world is full of men and women apparently splendidly endowed and highly educated, yet who can scarcely get a living.

Not long ago three college graduates were found working on a sheep farm in Australia, one from Oxford, one from Cambridge, and the other from a German University,—college men tending brutes! Trained to lead men, they drove sheep. The owner of the farm was an ignorant, coarse sheep-raiser. He knew nothing of books or theories, but he knew sheep. His three hired graduates could speak foreign languages and discuss theories of political economy and philosophy, but he could make money. He could talk about nothing but sheep and farm; but he had made a fortune, while the college

men could scarcely get a living. Even the University could not supply common sense. It was "culture against ignorance; the college against the ranch; and the ranch beat every time."

Do not expect too much from books. Bacon said that studies "teach not their own use, but that there is a practical wisdom without them, won by observation." The use of books must be found outside their own lids. It was said of a great French scholar: "He was drowned in his talents." Over-culture, without practical experience, weakens a man, and unfits him for real life. Book education alone tends to make a man too critical, too self-conscious, timid, distrustful of his abilities, too fine for the mechanical drudgery of practical life, too highly polished, and too finely cultured for every-day use.

The culture of books and colleges refines, yet it is often but an ethical culture, and is gained at the cost of vigor and rugged strength. Book culture alone tends to paralyze the practical faculties. The bookworm loses his individuality; his head is filled with theories and saturated with other men's thoughts. The stamina of the vigorous mind he brought from the farm has evaporated in college; and when he graduates,

he is astonished to find that he has lost the power to grapple with men and things, and is therefore outstripped in the race of life by the boy who has had no chance, but who, in the fierce struggle for existence, has developed hard common sense and practical wisdom. The college graduate often mistakes his crutches for strength. He inhabits an ideal realm where common sense rarely dwells. The world cares little for his theories or his encyclopædic knowledge. The cry of the age is for practical men. The nineteenth century does not ask you what you know or where you came from, but what can you do?

"Common sense," said Wendeil Phillips, "bows to the inevitable and makes use of it."

The foundations of English liberty were laid by men who could not write their names. "Talent is something, but tact is everything. It is not a sixth sense, but it is like the life of all the five. It is the open eye, the quick ear, the judging taste, the keen smell, and lively touch; it is the interpreter of all riddles, the surmounter of all difficulties, the remover of all obstacles."

Goethe, speaking of some comparisons that had been instituted between himself and Shake-

speare, said: "Shakespeare always hits the right nail on the head at once; but I have to stop and think which is the right nail, before I hit."

"I don't think the Proverbs of Solomon show very great wisdom," said a student at Brown University; "I could make as good ones myself." "Very well," replied President Wayland, "bring in two to-morrow morning." He did not bring them.

"Will you lecture for us for fame?" was the telegram young Henry Ward Beecher received from a Young Men's Christian Association in the West. "Yes, F. A. M. E. Fifty and my expenses," was the answer the shrewd young preacher sent back.

The triumphs of tact, or common sense, over talent and genius, are seen everywhere.

Tact, like Alexander, cuts the knots it cannot untie, and leads its forces to glorious victory. A practical man not only sees, but seizes the opportunity. There is a certain getting-on quality difficult to describe, but which is the great winner of the prizes of life.

He who would push to the front in this competitive age must be in touch with the great bustling, busy world. He must keep his mind

parallel with the nature of things. He must not be one of those who explore the illimitable and grasp the infinite, but never pay cash.

To see a man as he is you must turn him round and round until you get him at the right angle. Place him in a good light as you would a picture. The excellences and defects will appear if you get the right angle and a favorable light. How our old schoolmates have changed places in the ranking of actual life! The boy who led his class and was the envy of all has been distanced by the poor dunce who was called slow and stupid, but who had a sort of dull energy in him which enabled him to get on in the world. The class leader had only a theoretical knowledge, and could not cope with the stern realities of the age. Even genius, however rapid its flight, must not omit a single essential detail, and must be willing to work like a horse.

John Jacob Astor had practical talent in a remarkable degree. During a storm at sea, on his voyage to America, the other passengers ran about the deck in despair, expecting every minute to go down; but young Astor went below and coolly put on his best suit of clothes, saying that if the ship should founder and he

should happen to be rescued, he would at least save his best suit of clothes.

Tact is a national trait. The Chinese understood the art of printing, and possessed the magnetic needle and gunpowder, centuries in advance of other nations, but they did not have the practical talent to use them to any great advantage. But the English and other European nations changed the face of the civilized world with them.

Tact is a child of necessity. It is not found in people who live under a tropical sun, where there is little need of clothing, and where food is found ready prepared in the date, cocoanut, and banana. It has its highest development where man has to struggle hardest for existence.

CHAPTER XIII

"On Time," or the Triumph of Promptness

"On the great clock of time there is but one word—NOW."

By the street of by and by one arrives at the house of never.—CERVANTES.

Whilst we are considering when we are to begin, it is often too late to act.—QUINTILIAN.

EVEN in the old, slow days of stage-coaches, when it took a month of dangerous traveling to accomplish the distance we can now span in a few hours, unnecessary delay was a crime. One of the greatest gains civilization has made is in measuring and utilizing time. We can do as much in an hour to-day as they could in twenty hours a hundred years ago; and if it was a hanging affair then to lose a few minutes, what should the penalty be now for a like offense?

Cæsar's delay to read a message cost him his life when he reached the senate house. "Delays have dangerous ends." Colonel Rahl, the Hessian commander at Trenton, was playing

cards when a messenger brought a letter stating that Washington was crossing the Delaware. He put the letter in his pocket without reading it until the game was finished, when he rallied his men only to die just before his troops were taken prisoners. Only a few minutes' delay, but he lost honor, liberty, life!

Success is the child of two very plain parents —punctuality and accuracy. There are critical moments in every successful life when if the mind hesitate or a nerve flinch all will be lost.

"The whole period of youth," said Ruskin, "is one essentially of formation, edification, instruction. There is not an hour of it but is trembling with destinies — not a moment of which, once passed, the appointed work can ever be done again, or the neglected blow struck on the cold iron."

The energy wasted in postponing until to-morrow a duty of to-day, would often do the work. How much harder and more disagreeable, too, it is to do work which has been put off. What would have been done at the time with pleasure or even enthusiasm becomes drudgery after it has been delayed for days and weeks. Letters can never be answered so easily as when first received. Many large firms make

it a rule never to allow a letter to lie unanswered overnight. Promptness takes the drudgery out of an occupation. Putting off usually means leaving off, and going to do becomes going undone. Doing a deed is like sowing a seed; if not done at just the right time it will be forever out of season. The summer of eternity will not be long enough to bring to maturity the fruit of a delayed action. If a star or planet were delayed one second, it might throw the whole universe out of harmony.

"There is no moment like the present," said Maria Edgeworth; "not only so, there is no moment at all, no instant force and energy, but in the present. The man who will not execute his resolutions when they are fresh upon him, can have no hopes from them afterward. They will be dissipated, lost in the hurry and skurry of the world, or sunk in the slough of indolence." Cobbett said he owed his success to being "always ready" more than to all his natural abilities combined.

"How," asked a man of Sir Walter Raleigh, "do you accomplish so much, and in so short a time?" "When I have anything to do, I go and do it," was the reply. The man who always acts promptly, even if he makes occasional mis-

takes, will succeed when a procrastinator will fail—even if he have the better judgment.

When asked how he managed to accomplish so much work, and at the same time attend to his social duties, a French statesman replied, "I do it simply by never postponing till to-morrow what should be done to-day." It was said of an unsuccessful public man that he used to reverse this process, his favorite maxim being "never to do to-day what might be postponed till to-morrow." How many men have dawdled away their success and allowed companions and relatives to steal it away five minutes at a time. Amos Lawrence's motto was, "Business before friends."

"To-morrow?" It is the devil's motto. All history is strewn with its brilliant victims, the wrecks of half-finished plans and unexecuted resolutions. It is the favorite refuge of sloth and incompetency.

"Strike while the iron is hot," and "Make hay while the sun shines," are golden maxims. Most of us need a spur to make us begin and to hold us to our task.

Very few people recognize the hour when laziness begins to set in. Some people it attacks after dinner; some after lunch; and some after

seven o'clock in the evening. There is in every person's life a crucial hour in the day, which must be employed instead of wasted if the day is to be saved. With most people the early morning hour becomes the test of the day's success. Daniel Webster used often to answer twenty to thirty letters before breakfast.

A noted writer says that a bed is a bundle of paradoxes. We go to it with reluctance, yet we quit it with regret. We make up our minds every night to leave it early, but we make up our bodies every morning to keep it late. Yet most of those who have become eminent have been early risers. Peter the Great always rose before daylight. "I am," said he, "for making my life as long as possible, and therefore sleep as little as possible." Alfred the Great rose before daylight. In the hours of early morning Columbus planned his voyage to America, and Napoleon his greatest campaigns. Copernicus was an early riser, as were most of the famous astronomers of ancient and modern times. Bryant rose at five, Bancroft at dawn, and nearly all our leading authors, in the early morning. Washington, Jefferson, Webster, Clay, and Calhoun were all early risers. Henry VIII. breakfasted at seven and dined at ten.

John Jacob Astor and Cornelius Vanderbilt were accustomed to rise at set times each morning, and to retire at definite hours, even though they had company.

Walter Scott was a very punctual man. This was the secret of his enormous achievements. He made it a rule to answer all letters the day they were received. He rose at five. By breakfast-time he had broken the neck of the day's work, as he used to say. Writing to a youth who had obtained a situation and asked him for advice, he gave this counsel: "Beware of stumbling over a propensity which easily besets you from not having your time fully employed—I mean what the women call dawdling. Do instantly whatever is to be done, and take the hours of recreation after business, never before it."

Not too much can be said about the value of the habit of rising early. Late rising is one of the first signs of family degeneracy. Eight hours is enough sleep for any man. Very frequently seven hours is plenty. After the eighth hour in bed, if a man is able, it is his business to get up, dress quickly, and go to work.

"A singular mischance has happened to some of our friends," said Hamilton. "At the instant when He ushered them into existence, God

gave them a work to do, and He also gave them a competency of time; so much that if they began at the right moment, and wrought with sufficient vigor, their time and their work would end together. But a good many years ago a strange misfortune befell them. A fragment of their allotted time was lost. They cannot tell what became of it, but sure enough, it has dropped out of existence; for just like two measuring-lines laid alongside, the one an inch shorter than the other, their work and their time run parallel, but the work is always ten minutes in advance of the time. They are not irregular. They are never too soon. Their letters are posted the very minute after the mail is closed. They arrive at the wharf just in time to see the steamboat off, they come in sight of the terminus precisely as the station gates are closing. They do not break any engagement nor neglect any duty; but they systematically go about it too late, and usually too late by about the same fatal interval."

There is one thing that is almost as sacred as the marriage relation,—that is, an appointment. A man who fails to meet his appointment, unless he has a good reason, is practically a liar, and the world treats him as such.

When President Washington dined at four, new members of Congress invited to dine at the White House would sometimes arrive late, and be mortified to find the President eating. "My cook," Washington would say, "never asks if the visitors have arrived, but if the hour has arrived."

When his secretary excused the lateness of his attendance by saying that his watch was too slow, Washington replied, "Then you must get a new watch, or I another secretary."

Franklin said to a servant who was always late, but always ready with an excuse, "I have generally found that the man who is good at an excuse is good for nothing else."

On the eve of Nelson's departure on a famous cruise, his coachman said that the carriage would be at the door punctually at six o'clock. "A quarter before," said the admiral; "I have always been a quarter of an hour before my time, and it has made a man of me."

Napoleon once invited his marshals to dine with him, but, as they did not arrive at the moment appointed, he began to eat without them. They came in just as he was rising from the table. "Gentlemen," said he, "it is now past dinner, and we will immediately proceed to business."

Webster was never late at a recitation in school or college. In court, in congress, in society, he was equally punctual. Amid the cares and distractions of a singularly busy life, Horace Greeley managed to be on time for every appointment. Many a trenchant paragraph for the "Tribune," was written while the editor was waiting for men of leisure, tardy at some meeting.

The comet which visits our atmosphere but once in a thousand years is never a single second behind time.

Punctuality is the soul of business, as brevity of wit.

Every business man knows that there are moments on which hang the destiny of years. If you arrive a few moments late at the bank, your paper may be protested and your credit ruined. During the first seven years of his mercantile career, Amos Lawrence did not permit a bill to remain unsettled over Sunday. Punctuality is said to be the politeness of kings. Some men are always running to catch up with their business; they are always in a hurry, and give you the impression that they are late for a train. They lack method, and seldom accomplish much.

Promptness is the mother of confidence and gives credit. It is the best possible proof that our own affairs are well ordered and well conducted, and gives others confidence in our ability. The man who keeps his time (i. e., is punctual), as a rule, will keep his word.

"Better late than never" is not half so good a maxim as "Better never late."

A conductor's watch is behind time, and a frightful railway collision occurs. A leading firm with enormous assets becomes bankrupt, because an agent is tardy in transmitting available funds, as ordered. An innocent man is hanged because the messenger bearing a reprieve should have arrived five minutes earlier. A man is stopped five minutes to hear a trivial story and misses a train or steamer by one minute.

"We are all so indolent by nature and by habit," said John Todd, "that we feel it a luxury to find a man of real, undeviating punctuality. We love to lean upon such a man, and we are willing to purchase such a staff at almost any price. It shows, at least, that he has conquered himself."

Many a wasted life dates its ruin from a lost five minutes. "Too late" can be read between

the lines on the tombstone of many a man who has failed. A few minutes often makes all the difference between victory and defeat, success and failure.

CHAPTER XIV

A Long Life, and How to Reach It

Pile luxury as high as you will, health is better.—JULIA WARD HOWE.

O blessed health! thou art above all gold and treasure; 't is thou who enlargest the soul, and openest all its powers to receive instruction and to relish virtue. He that has thee has little more to wish for; and he that is so wretched as to want thee, wants everything without thee.—STERNE.

"Health and cheerfulness make beauty."

The nearer men live to each other, the shorter their lives are.—DR. PARR.

Some men dig their graves with their teeth.—SYDNEY SMITH.

Shut the door to the sun and you will open it to the doctor.—ITALIAN PROVERB.

Joy, temperance, and repose,
Slam the door on the Doctor's nose.—LONGFELLOW.

THE greatest artist the world has known painted a picture, the most beautiful ever seen. Day by day, for years, he wrought upon this masterpiece, developing it from a mere sketch until it became a picture which all who saw delighted to look upon. But notwithstanding his

wonderful power, the artist could never attain in this work the perfection sought. His colors seemed to change in the night. The rosy flush imparted to cheek and lip were lost as often as they were renewed. The flashing eyes grew dull and leaden, and seemed to sink into the canvas. The beautiful flesh lost its rose-leaf tint, and became sallow and unnatural. The painter's art was baffled, and he knew not why.

Yet his hand had not lost its cunning, his colors were not impure, his conception was not at fault. His work was well done, but it was spoiled in the night by an enemy, a rival painter whom none praised and whose work no one admired. Jealous of the fame his rival had won by joyous, glorious pictures, while his own sombre works were shunned, he crept by night to the studio of the other, and with palette spread with shadow tints, wrought ruin with the work he could not imitate. Thus the painting which should have excelled all others never attained perfection, and was ruined at last beyond all hope of restoration.

Again and again the two painters have repeated their efforts upon other canvas, with similar results, as a rule. Their names are Health and Disease, and they paint upon human

canvas. The first rises and retires early, and works as much as possible in the open air, in the blessed sunlight, where keen winds blow in winter and zephyrs in spring and summer, where golden harvests wave and fruit-laden trees sway in the autumn breezes, where fountains murmur and rivulets sing, where men work and romping children play, where cattle are afield, and birds and bees on the wing. The other sleeps through the early hours, but comes forth when Nature is asleep; and under the flickering street lights or the light of the silent stars, or in dark nooks and corners sometimes by day, his withering touch falls upon the fairest work of his rival, injuring it all and utterly ruining much of it. Only a very few paintings are kept almost wholly out of the reach of Disease, yet how wonderful are they in their comparative perfection!

A vase of exquisite beauty, found in a marble sarcophagus near Rome during the sixteenth century, was bought by the Duchess of Portland for ten thousand dollars and loaned to the British Museum. The visitor is powerfully impressed with its matchless symmetry; but, on examining it closely, he sees that the surface is seamed with cracks, and that in some places

holes have been closed by a kind of cement. He is told that a madman once struck this beautiful vase with his cane, and broke it into a hundred pieces. The fragments were put together again at great cost and trouble; yet the vase is practically a wreck.

The world is full of men and women like this vase—marred, scarred, broken, patched, mere shadows of their former selves. They look fairly well, but their constitutions have been broken by dissipation, by exposure, by overwork, by ignorance, by violation in some way of the laws of nature. Many of them have patched the pieces together by drugs, physicians, climate, or travel; but, like the vase, they can withstand no strain. Mocked by an ambition for success, but with no strength to attain it, they drag out a miserable existence.

"I am certain," says Horace Mann, "I could have performed twice the labor, both better and with greater ease to myself, had I known as much of the laws of health and life at twenty-one as I do now. In college I was taught all about the motions of the planets, as carefully as though they would have been in danger of getting off the track if I had not known how to trace their orbits; but about my own organiza-

tion, and the conditions indispensable to the healthful functions of my own body, I was left in profound ignorance. Nothing could be more preposterous. I ought to have begun at home, and taken the stars when it should have become their turn. The consequence was, I broke down at the beginning of my second college year, and have never had a well day since. Whatever labor I have since been able to do, I have done it all on credit instead of capital—a most ruinous way, either in regard to health or money. For the last twenty-five years, so far as it regards health, I have been put, from day to day, upon my good behavior; and during the whole of this period, as an Hibernian would say, if I had lived as other folks do for a month, I should have died in a fortnight."

With rare exceptions, the great prizes of life fall to those of stalwart, robust physique. If you have a bodily weakness, such as lack of vigor or physical stamina, the effect will show itself in everything you do, and cripple your whole lifework. Every one who knows you reads your weakness and lack of tone in your unsteady eye and hesitating step. It appears in every letter you write, in every speech you make, in everything you do; you cannot disguise it, and you

will fall as far below success as you fall below the health-line. Every faculty of the mind sympathizes with every defect and weakness of the body.

The world is full of half-done, botched work, the result of weak and sickly lives. The tendency of civilization has been to deteriorate bodily stamina. Cities are the graves of the physiques of our race. Long residence in cities lowers the type of physical manhood. If towns were not constantly recruited from the country, the constitutions and intellects of their inhabitants would rapidly decline in vigor. Most of the stalwart men of our large centres were born in the country, but each succeeding generation of their descendants becomes weaker.

How quickly we Americans exhaust life. With what panting haste we pursue everything. Every American you meet seems to be late for a train. Hurry is stamped in the wrinkles of the American face. We pride ourselves upon being practical men, men who strike sledge-hammer blows in our business, men who make business of recreation, even. We are men of action, we die without it; nay, we go faster and faster as the years go by, speed our machinery to the utmost, stretch the silver cord of life

until it snaps. We have not even leisure to die a natural death, we go at high pressure until the boiler bursts. We have actually changed the type of our diseases, to suit our changed constitution. Instead of the lingering maladies of our fathers, we drop down and die of heart disease or apoplexy, now so common, formerly so rare. Even death has adopted our terrible gait.

Nature is a great economist. She makes the most of every opportunity, she works up all odds and ends. After you are wrecked and useless she leaves the wreck upon the rocks or reef on which you were stranded, and hoists her signal of danger, as a warning to others.

You lose your life, but nature wants to use you for a warning. You lose your health, but the tell-tales are left in your face to show the world how it went. If by drink, nature hangs out as her sign a red flag of distress, it may be, on your nose, in front of your eyes, where you can't escape it, and where everybody you meet reads the terrible warning. Though your life is a failure, and you have become useless, nature can still afford to keep you as an object-lesson to warn your fellows.

Nature is no sentimentalist. A bullet will not

swerve a hair's breadth from its course, though a Lincoln or a Garfield stand in its way. A drop of prussic acid will kill a king as quickly as his meanest vassal. Water will drown you, even though you are saving your own child from death. Fire will burn you to a cinder, even while you are trying to snatch your dear ones from the flames. Every atom in the universe has immutable law stamped upon it. The rose blooms in your garden to-day under the same laws that unfolded the petals of the first flower in Eden. In all the sidereal ages the stars have returned from their vast journeys through trackless space, with the same unvarying accuracy as when they began to roll on the morning of creation. They have never once lost their way in their wild path through space, nor varied a second in a century. Not one whit less are we subject to the immutable laws of God.

Our nerves are sentinels placed thickest where there is the most danger. Pain has a use and purpose beyond those of happiness or pleasure. It tends to restrict the hurtful practices of life. Nature thus compels us to recognize her established order, or laws. The very sensitiveness and delicacy of our nerves, which give exquisite pleasure when used aright, give

intense suffering when they are abused. A cinder might ruin the eye if the pain did not compel its prompt removal. Gazing at the sun would destroy the child's sight, were it not for the sensitiveness of the nerves, which compels the closing of the lids. Pain is the great monitor of our lives, ever reminding us of approaching danger. Few children would grow up without being disfigured and mutilated, were they not constantly warned by sensitive nerves. A paralytic was once advised by his physician to take a warm foot-bath; and, because of the loss of the sensitiveness of the nerves in that foot, he actually scalded his skin without knowing that the water was hot.

In the alleys and by-ways of our cities we often see the sign, "Dangerous Passing." The Creator has put up such signs all along the pathway of life. We read them over every street and alley that leads to vice and degradation. We read over the doors that lead to the gambling dens, the saloon, the dens of infamy, "All hope abandon, ye who enter here." Dangerous Passing! We read it in the deformed and crippled lives of those who have disregarded its warning, in the botched, half-finished work of the weak and inefficient. We read it in the

ruined lives, the lost opportunities, the blighted hopes of those who heed it not; we read it in the prematurely old. All who have violated Nature's laws carry about in their bodies the unmistakable signs which the world may read as a terrible warning.

"It is continued temperance which sustains the body for the longest period of time, and which most surely preserves it free from sickness," writes Humboldt, when asked the secret of his success. No employer will keep in his office a drunkard, a gambler, or a profligate, for the very good reason that these vices not only debase the body, but also glut the mind with thoughts of which business has no part. Drink has become the curse of the world. Whole battalions of splendid young men who started in life with glowing hopes have been swept away by whiskey and rum.

"My recipe for self-preservation is exercise," said David Dudley Field. "I am a very temperate man, and have always been so. I have taken care of myself, and as I have a good constitution I suppose that is the reason I am so well." Exercise is indeed a great life-preserver.

When the pores of the body are kept open by regular exercise, the pores of the imagination

are apt to be closed against tainted subjects. *Sana mens in sano corpore,* is a well-understood maxim. Says Frederick W. Robertson, England's most spiritual preacher: "It is wonderful how views of life depend upon exercise and right management of the physical constitution."

Healthy thoughts and healthy doctrines must come from healthy minds, and healthy minds cannot exist apart from healthy bodies.

Life is a struggle at best. We scarcely begin to live ere we commence to die. Life and death strive in us for mastery, and we are but too confident of how the struggle will end. The enemies of human life are thick on every side. A thousand diseases dog our footsteps from the cradle to the grave. They lurk in the food we eat, in the water we drink, in the air we breathe. They watch at the door of every cold, exposure, neglect, or imprudence, seeking entrance to the citadel of life.

The plague has ever followed hard on the heels of famine and of financial depression. The germs of disease which have lurked in the system for years, perhaps, while the body was vigorous and strong, suddenly spring into activity the moment the system is depressed below the health-line, and its wonted power of resistance gone.

We should take care never to let our systems run down below the health-line. Germs of a hundred diseases lurk just below this line, waiting for some indiscretion, some weakness, some opportunity to gain a foothold. So in the field of human society, corruption first attacks those who are physically feeble. How many are wicked only because they are physically weak! Many a youth becomes morally depraved simply because he has been a stranger to fresh air, cold water, and exercise.

The wisdom of the wisest is of no avail to rebreathe the departed breath into the lifeless clay. All the chemists in the universe cannot manufacture one drop of blood, nor can physician's skill rouse the tired heart which has once stood still. No doctor can lay his clumsy hand on the delicate brain and bid it think again. But the necessary ounce of prevention is at one's command. He must not live too intensely, if he would live long in years.

Raphael, according to E. P. Whipple the greatest painter of moral beauty, and Titian, the greatest painter of sensuous beauty, were both almost equally young, though Raphael died at thirty-seven, while Titian was prematurely cut off by the plague when he was only a hundred.

"I would keep better hours if I were a boy again," said James T. Fields; "that is, I would go to bed earlier than most boys do." Nothing gives more mental and bodily vigor than sound rest when properly applied. Sleep is our replenisher.

"In all my political life,' said Gladstone, "I have never been kept awake five minutes by any debate in Parliament."

Horace Greeley refused to sit up at night sessions of Congress, abruptly leaving when his hour for retiring arrived.

"I can do nothing," said Grant, "without nine hours' sleep."

Late hours are shadows from the grave.

For the evils resulting from late hours, improper diet, lack of exercise, and other forms of intemperance, men have been accustomed to seek relief in drugs, but they are beginning to realize that the aid a physician can render is almost wholly limited to cheering and encouraging his patients, and helping them to follow ordinary hygienic laws. Very many of our diseases exist only in the imagination and consciousness of the patient.

Employ three physicians: First, Doctor Quiet; then, Doctor Merryman; and then, Doctor Diet.

Our beliefs are built upon models, and an ideal body can never be built upon a deformed and sick model. The model in the mind must be perfect, if we would obtain perfection of the body.

The very fact that we are conscious that the physical manhood of our race should be lifted out of its bondage to a higher level, and that the Great Teacher commanded us not only to be perfect, but "perfect even as our Father in Heaven is perfect," is proof that such perfection is possible. God has not given the bird an instinct for the South in winter, without a South to match it; nor has he mocked us with ideals, longings, and aspirations which we have no power to attain. The very consciousness that we are capable of performing infinitely more than we ever do accomplish, is an indication that such perfection is possible, and that we shall have time and opportunity somewhere to develop into that perfect model. Man has an ideal in his soul, of the physical man, as well as of the moral man, and He who gave this ideal will give the opportunity for its realization.

Although we cannot defy death, it is now well known that we can greatly delay it by carefully observing the laws of health, especially in re-

gard to diet. The chief characteristics of old age are found to be deposits of a gelatinous and fibrinous character in the human system, producing gradual ossification. Man begins life in a gelatinous condition, and ends it in an osseous or bony one—soft in infancy, hard in old age. This process is desirable in childhood; but, as we grow older, it is thought we may retard it more and more by swallowing less and less of the carbonates and phosphates of lime, the principal agents by which the transformation is effected. For this purpose the best drink is distilled water, while fruits, fish, poultry, veal, and lamb are much better than beef, bread, or salt meat of any kind. In this, as in other things, the best way to conquer Nature is to learn and obey her laws.

CHAPTER XV

Character is Power

Character is power — is influence; it makes friends; creates funds; draws patronage and support; and opens a sure and easy way to wealth, honor, and happiness.— J. HAWES.

As there is nothing in the world great but man, there is nothing truly great in man but character.—W. M. EVARTS.

The spirit of a single mind
Makes that of multitudes take one direction,
As roll the waters to the breathing wind.—BYRON.

"BE you only whole and sufficient," says Emerson, "and I shall feel you in every part of my life and fortune, and I can as easily dodge the gravitation of the globe as escape your influence." Character is power.

In the great monetary panic of 1857, a meeting was called of the various bank presidents of New York city. When asked what percentage of specie had been drawn during the day, some replied fifty per cent., some even as high as seventy-five per cent., but Moses Taylor of the City Bank said: "We had in the bank this

morning, $400,000; this evening, $470,000." While other banks were badly "run," the confidence in the City Bank under Mr. Taylor's management was such that people had deposited in that institution what they had drawn from other banks. Character gives confidence.

We can calculate the efficiency of an engine to the last ounce of pressure. Its power can be as accurately determined as the temperature of a room. But who can rightly determine the inherent force of a man of predominant character? Who can estimate the influence of a single boy or girl upon the character of a school? Traditions, customs, manners have been changed for several school generations by one or two strong characters, who in their own small way, but none the less important, have become school heroes—as much real forces in life as if they were locomotives dragging loads of cars. Any teacher will tell you that many a school has been pulled up grade, or run down, by just such imperious characters.

When war with France seemed imminent, in 1798, President Adams wrote to George Washington, then a private citizen in retirement at Mount Vernon: "We must have your name, if you will permit us to use it; there will be more

efficacy in it than in many an army." Character is power.

Wellington said that Napoleon's presence in the French army was equivalent to forty thousand additional soldiers, and Richter said of the invincible Luther, "His words were half battles."

St. Bernard had such power over men that mothers hid their sons, wives their husbands, companions their friends, lest they should be persuaded to enter the monastery.

"You could not stand with Burke under an archway while a shower of rain was passing," said Dr. Johnson, "without discovering that he was an extraordinary man."

Warren Hastings said he thought himself the basest of men while Burke was hurling at him his terrible denunciations when on trial for his alleged misrule in India.

"Hence it was," said Franklin, speaking of the influence of his known integrity of character, "that I had so much weight with my fellow citizens. I was but a bad speaker, never eloquent, subject to much hesitation in my choice of words, hardly correct in language, and yet I generally carried my point."

"The man behind the sermon," said William

M. Evarts, "is the secret of John Hall's power." In fact if there is not a man with a character behind it nothing about it is of the slightest consequence.

Jefferson once wrote to Washington: "The confidence of the whole nation centres in you." There was not a throne in Europe that could stand against Washington's character, and in comparison with it the millions of the Rothschilds would look ridiculous. What are the works of avarice compared with the names of Lincoln, Grant, or Garfield? A few names have ever been the salt which has preserved the nations from premature decay.

"It is the nature of party in England," said John Russell, "to ask the assistance of men of genius, but to follow the guidance of men of character."

Power is the great goal of ambition, and it is only through a noble character that one can arrive at a personality strong enough to move men and nations.

During the civil war in France, Montaigne alone kept his castle gates unbarred, and was not molested. His character was more powerful than the king's guards. Truly, as Pope says, he's armed without that's innocent within.

History and biography show many wonderful instances of the immunity accorded to men of character. A strange talisman seemed to surround them. Read the lives of William Penn, Roger Williams, Xavier, Livingstone, and of many others who courted danger for the sake of religion or science, and why is it that they have been spared by the savage spear? Character is protection.

Character, when expressed, is only reflex action: it is the doing what we have always resolved to do when the chance came. Character is like stock in trade; the more of it a man possesses, the greater his facilities for adding to it. Just as a man prizes his character, so is he.

Sir Philip Sidney, mortally wounded at Zutphen, was tortured by thirst from his great loss of blood. Water was carried to him. A wounded soldier borne by on a litter fixed his eyes upon the bottle with such a wistful gaze that Sidney insisted on giving it to him, saying, "Thy necessity is greater than mine." Sidney died, but this deed alone would have made his name honored when that of the king he served is forgotten. Florence Nightingale tells of soldiers suffering with dysentery, who, scorning to report themselves sick lest they should force more

labor on their overworked comrades, would go down to the trenches and make them their death-beds. Say what you will, there is in the man who gives his time, his strength, his life, if need be, for something not himself,—whether he call it his queen, his country, his colors, or his fellow man,—something more truly Christian than in all the ascetic fasts, humiliations, and confessions that have ever been made.

There are men and women in every country who conquer before they speak, and who exert an influence out of all proportion to their ability, and people wonder what is the secret of their power over men. It is natural for all classes to believe in and to follow character, for character is power. Even the murderer respects the justice of the judge who pronounces his death-sentence. Something in him instinctively feels and indorses its right and justice.

It was said of Sheridan: "Had he possessed principle he might have ruled the world." How few young men realize that their success in life depends more upon what they are than upon what they know. It was character, not ability, that elected Washington and Lincoln to the presidency.

Webster bid high for the presidency. The

price was his honor—all his former convictions. When a farmer heard that he had lost the nomination, he said: "The South never pays its slaves."

What is this principle that Napoleon and Webster lacked? Is it not a deathless loyalty to the highest ideal which the world has been able to produce up to the present date? This is what we admire and respect in strong men whose roots are deep in the ground and whose character is robust enough to keep them like oaks in their places when all around is whirling.

"Trying to run without a pilot," was the only comment of a captain, as a passenger once pointed to a wreck lying upon the rocks. This would form a pertinent inscription over Byron, Burns, and many a premature grave. Character is safety.

If there is any one power in the world that will make itself felt, it is character. There may be little culture, slender abilities, no property, no position in "society;" yet, if there be a character of sterling excellence, it will demand influence and secure respect.

"A right act strikes a chord that extends through the whole universe, touches all moral intelligence, visits every world, vibrates along

its whole extent, and conveys its vibrations to the very bosom of God."

The characters of great men are the dowry of a nation. Chateaubriand said he saw Washington but once, yet it inspired his whole life. An English tanner whose leather gained a great reputation said he should not have made it so good had he not read Carlyle. It is said that Franklin reformed the manners of a whole workshop in London. Ariosto and Titian inspired each other and heightened each other's glory. "Tell me whom you admire, and I will tell you what you are." A book or work of art puts us in the mood or train of thought of him who produced it. Is Michael Angelo dead? Ask the hundreds of thousands who have gazed with rapt souls upon his immortal works at Rome. In how many thousands of lives has he lived and reigned? Are Washington, Grant, and Lincoln dead? Did they ever live more truly than to-day? What American heart or home does not enshrine their characters?

Through all the centuries of Italy's degradation Dante's name was the watchword of the country, while in the brain of many a slave still echoed the impassioned words of Cicero, of the Scipios, and the Gracchi Byron said: "The

Italians talk Dante, write Dante, and think Dante at this moment to an excess which would be ridiculous but that he deserves their admiration." Even degenerate Greece is not dead to the influence of the intellectual and moral giants of her golden age. Indeed, they still hold sway throughout the earth, more potent than when living, in the realms of thought and feeling. Our minds are shaped by the combined influence of the minds of men called dead, nearly as strongly as by those with whom we associate in life; our creeds are sanctified by the devotion of martyrs in whose sufferings under persecution we share through sympathy, and are thereby ennobled; our deeds are such as we feel that our ideals would have performed under like conditions.

Every thought which enters the mind, every word we utter, every deed we perform, makes its impression upon the inmost fibre of our being, and the resultant of these impressions is our character. The study of books, of music, or of the fine arts, is not essential to a lofty character. Those most accomplished in learning and art have often been the worst of men and women. Indeed, bookworms who become all books, and artists who become all art, are

usually weak. Low, aimless lives leave their mark upon the character as truly as the Creator branded Cain with his guilt. On the other hand, there are men in whom the very dogs on the street believe. Character is power.

We resemble insects which assume the color of the leaves and plants they feed upon, for sooner or later we become like the food of our minds, like the creatures that live in our hearts. Every act of our lives, every word, every association, is written with an iron pen into the very texture of our being. The ghosts of our murdered opportunities, squandered forces, killed time, forever rise up to rebuke us, and will not down. How hard it is to learn that like begets like; that an acorn will always become an oak, if anything; that birds of a feather will flock together; that there is a magnetic affinity between kindred things which inevitably brings them together, and that they must communicate their own properties and nothing else; that they can do no differently.

Association with the good can only produce good; with the wicked, evil. No matter how sly, how secret, no matter if our associations have been in the dark, their images will sooner or later appear in our faces and conduct. The

idols of the heart look through our eyes, appear in our manners, and betray their worshipers. Our associates, our loves, hates, struggles, triumphs, defeats, dissipations, aspirations, intrigues, honesty, dishonesty, all leave their indelible autographs upon the soul's window and are published to the world. Black hearts cast black shadows upon the face which all our will power cannot drive away. What a panorama passes across the face of a dissipated life! Behold the barrooms, the dens of infamy, the dissipated wretches, the polluted companions, the disgusting scenes, the askings and denyings of passions, the struggles for victory, the broken resolutions, the sore defeats. But oh! what radiance glorifies the faces of those who have overcome temptation and disciplined their powers in striving for self-improvement!

Did you ever see a pure and noble woman enter a room where a lot of coarse, rough men were talking and telling stories? The whole character and tone of the company rises. The very atmosphere seems purer. The entire company is transformed. Sometimes we see such a woman transform a whole neighborhood. On the other hand, one bad woman may sometimes ruin a hundred young men.

We do not need an introduction to a great man to feel his greatness. If you meet a cheerful man on the street on a cold day, you seem to feel the mercury rise several degrees.

Our manners, our bearing, our presence, tell the story of our lives, though we do not speak, and the influence of every act is felt in the utmost part of the globe. Every man that ever lived contributed something towards making me what I am. The chisel of every member of society contributed a blow to the marble of my life, and influenced its destiny.

He is the greatest man, to me, at least, who emancipates me from the imprisonment of my surroundings and environments, who loosens my tongue, and unlocks the floodgates of my possibilities. He is a lens to my defective vision. I see things in a broader light, my horizon extends, my possibilities expand. My nerves thrill with the consciousness of added force. My whole being vibrates with the magnetic currents from another soul.

Anger begets anger, and hate, hate; the passions are contagious. Actors tell us that they often go upon the stage with heavy hearts and melancholy moods, when they have to play light and gay characters, without the slightest feeling

of sympathy with the parts they have taken; yet so powerful is the law of association that the moment they assume the attitude of the character, the real feelings which belong to it come to them. Everything reproduces itself, and cannot do otherwise. One discordant instrument spoils the harmony of the finest orchestra, and one mischief-making man or woman ruins the peace of a town.

"Character is always known," says Emerson. "Thefts never enrich; alms never impoverish; murder will speak out of stone walls. The least mixture of a lie — for example, the taint of vanity, any attempt to make a good impression, a favorable appearance—will instantly vitiate the effect. But speak the truth and all nature and all spirits help you with unexpected furtherance."

Character is the poor man's capital.

Believe with Stevens that every man has in himself a continent of undiscovered possibilities. Happy is he who acts the Columbus to his own soul.

Luther says that the prosperity of a country depends, not on the abundance of its revenues, nor on the strength of its fortifications, nor on the beauty of its public buildings; but it consists

in the number of its cultivated citizens, in its men of education, enlightenment, and character; here are to be found its true interest, its chief strength, its real power.

THE END

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